

# An Account of the Life of Ḥakím Áqá Ján

*One of the first Bahá'ís from the Jewish community*

Translated and annotated by Adib Masumian

During my travels from America to Canada over the course of many long years, I used to meet with Mírzá Áqá Khán Katírání (Ya'qúb) and benefit from the things he would say. One day, I asked him to write an account of the life of his great-grandfather, Ḥakím Áqá Ján, for posterity. To the readers of *Payám-i-Bahá'í*,<sup>1</sup> I present the article below, which was written by him and has only slightly been edited.

—Hushidar Motlagh

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In 1295 AH [1878 CE],<sup>2</sup> two brothers by the names of Áqá Muḥammad-Javád and Áqá Muḥammad-Báqir Naráqí were living in Hamadán. At that time, the wife of Áqá Muḥammad-Javád fell sick,<sup>3</sup> and the late Ḥakím Áqá Ján was taken to visit her. After diagnosing her illness, he gave the brothers a certain amount of medicine for them to administer to her gradually. (In those days, pharmacies did not exist in Iran; physicians themselves had medicine at their disposal and prescribed it to patients.)

By mistake, Ḥakím Áqá Ján had given the patient some strychnine pills. After the patient took two of them, her condition took a turn for the worse, and she began to suffer the agony of death. Ḥakím Áqá Ján was brought to her bedside at once, and he realized that, instead of quinine pills, he had given her strychnine pills. He grew fearful and worried since he thought these people were Muslims and that they would kill him if their patient died. But Áqá Muḥammad-Javád said to him, with the utmost compassion, “Do not worry. If it is not the Will of God, she will not die. We do not hold you responsible for this and will not lodge a complaint.” Ḥakím Áqá Ján then asked, “Are you not Muslims?” They replied, “We are Bahá'ís. Do not be upset at all, even if the patient dies.”<sup>4</sup> This event led Ḥakím Áqá Ján to investigate the Bahá'í Faith.

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<sup>1</sup> This article was originally published in *Payám-i-Bahá'í*, no. 469 (December 2018 / 175 BE), pp. 54–56, available online at: [https://adibmasumian.files.wordpress.com/2022/09/motlagh\\_hakim\\_aqa\\_jan.pdf](https://adibmasumian.files.wordpress.com/2022/09/motlagh_hakim_aqa_jan.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> 'Azízu'lláh Sulaymání has this as 1294 AH, equivalent to 1877 CE (*Maṣábiḥ-i-Hidáyat*, vol. 4, p. 452), while Moojan Momen has it as “about 1875 [CE]” (*The Bahá'í Communities of Iran*, vol. 2, p. 183).

<sup>3</sup> According to Sulaymání, Ḥakím Áqá Ján diagnosed her illness as malaria (*Maṣábiḥ*, vol. 4, p. 452).

<sup>4</sup> Momen writes that she ultimately recovered (*Bahá'í Communities*, vol. 2, p. 183).



Ḥakím Áqá Ján (left) with his maternal cousin, Ḥakím Raḥím Ḥáfízu's-Şiḥḥiḥ (right), whom he eventually converted to the Bahá'í Faith

(Source: Momen, *Bahá'í Communities*, vol. 2, p. 186.)

In those same days, Ibn-i-Aşdaq had come from Khurásán to Hamadán and would hold gatherings for teaching the Cause at the home of Muḥammad-Javád and Muḥammad-Báqir. Ḥakím Áqá Ján attended these gatherings and eventually accepted the Cause. That great man was the first Jewish believer from Hamadán. Having held a position of leadership among the Jews in that city, he was well known and enjoyed a high status in both the Jewish and Muslim communities. His acceptance of the Cause guided countless other Jews of Hamadán to do the same, among them Ḥájí Mihdí Arjumand, the author of *Gulşhan-i-Ḥaqáyiḳ*.<sup>5</sup>

The wife of Ḥakím Áqá Ján, Ṭúṭí Khánum, was a deeply faithful believer.

### **A Memory of Ṭúṭí Khánum**

I belong to the third generation of Ḥakím Áqá Ján's descendants. I was about four or five years old at the time; we resided at the home of Mírzá Raḥmán Núríoḥf, opposite the Ta'íd School in Hamadán.<sup>6</sup> Ṭúṭí Khánum lived with us in the upper story of that residence. One day, my mother went to the Local Spiritual Assembly, and she left me and my younger brother with Ṭúṭí Khánum. Some time later, there was a knock at the door, and I ran to open

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<sup>5</sup> A book of Bahá'í proofs written in about 1917–18.

<sup>6</sup> A boys' school founded in 1908 by the Local Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of Hamadán. Soli Shahvar writes, "The progress of the Ta'íd School in those early years was so rapid, and its fame so widely circulated in Hamadan, that many of the city's civil officials and famous people also sent their children to the school, without any hesitation or superstitious notions. Thus, the number of students at the Ta'íd School soon exceeded 700 . . ." (*The Forgotten Schools*, p. 88). For more extensive information on this school, refer to pp. 168–69 of that same work.

it. I saw a very dignified and well-dressed lady, who said, “I wish to see ʔúʔí Khánum.” I invited her to come in. She went in front of the stairs, and ʔúʔí Khánum came out and asked, “What can I do for you?” She replied, “It is a private matter.” ʔúʔí Khánum invited her up to her quarters. That lady said to ʔúʔí Khánum, “I am a noblewoman of Kúlyá.<sup>7</sup> I cannot get pregnant by my husband. I have gone to Işfahán and ʔihrán and spent a great deal of money in hopes that I might become pregnant, but God has not granted me with a child up to now. I fear that my husband will choose another wife. I have heard that you can help me. If I should succeed, I will give you a thousand *túmáns*.” This was a considerable sum of money at that time.

I remember well that ʔúʔí Khánum went to another room, performed her ablutions, and raised her hands in prayer. When she finished praying, she said four or five times, weeping as she spoke, “O [Ḥakím] Áqá Ján, I ask this of you!” She then took some white powder (I did not know what it was), made a paste out of it in a piece of bread, shaped it into a pill, and gave it to her. “Take this,” she said. “I hope that, out of His grace, God will fulfill your desire.”

One day, two or three months later, that lady came to our home with her servant. She had brought some *agirdak*,<sup>8</sup> a large amount of butter, and a hundred *túmáns* for ʔúʔí Khánum. “I have become pregnant,” she said. The following year, too, she brought a [slaughtered] sheep, a great quantity of butter, and a sum of money for ʔúʔí Khánum, and said, “God has blessed me with a son.”

### Another Memory of ʔúʔí Khánum

It was right at noon when ʔúʔí Khánum came to our home one day. I had come from school to have lunch. ʔúʔí Khánum said, “I have come to say goodbye to you all, since I am going to die today.” Jokingly, I said to her, “Great-grandma ʔúʔí, we’re having *ḥalím*<sup>9</sup> for lunch. I won’t let you go until you have your lunch.” She replied, “I need to say goodbye to everyone, child; I don’t have time.” As I was returning from school that afternoon, I was told ʔúʔí Khánum had died.

Ḥakím Áqá Ján and his wife, ʔúʔí Khánum, had one son, Mírzá Mihdí Khán (the personal physician of Náşiri’-d-Dín Sháh), and two daughters who survived them: ʔávús Khánum, my grandmother, and Ḥájar Khánum.

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<sup>7</sup> An area between Hamadán and Kurdistán.

<sup>8</sup> A kind of fried dough prepared for special occasions. Also called *agirdih* and *ardak*.

<sup>9</sup> “A kind of porridge made of wheat and meat” (Sulayman Hayyim, *New Persian–English Dictionary: Complete and Modern*, vol. 1, p. 663).

The late Ḥakím Áqá Ján was blessed with innumerable bounties from Bahá'u'lláh, Who revealed several Tablets in his honor. The niece of Tútí Khánum told me the following from the time when his health was in decline:

The day Ḥakím Áqá Ján died, I was fanning him at his bedside. He lay fast asleep and unconscious. All of a sudden, he sat up straight in his bed and said to me, “Turn around!” “Why?” I asked hastily. He replied, “Do you not see that the Blessed Beauty has entered?” I turned around but did not see anything. At that moment, the late Ḥakím Áqá Ján bowed down and recited a verse from the Torah, “And the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken it,”<sup>10</sup> and then passed away.<sup>11</sup>

About two months later, without anyone having conveyed the news of Ḥakím Áqá Ján's death to Bahá'u'lláh, He revealed a Tablet for his son, Mírzá Mihdí Khán, where He states:

We, verily, were with him at the moment of his ascension, and mentioned him with that whereby the ocean of pardon hath surged . . .

The Tablet revealed after the passing of Ḥakím Áqá Ján for his son, Dr. Mihdí Khán, is as follows:

O Pen! Make mention of the one named Mihdí, that he may rejoice and be of the thankful.

O Mihdí! Harken thou to the Voice which is lifted up from the Crimson Tree in this most lofty Spot. No God is there but Him, the One, the Incomparable, the All-Knowing, the All-Informed. They who have broken the Covenant of God and violated His Testament are accounted as utterly lost in the Book of God, the Lord of the Worlds.

Say: O people! The Day is come, and the Self-Subsisting crieth out in His all-powerful and most mighty Name. Beware lest that which is with the foolish debar you from the Most Exalted Horizon. Take hold of what hath been given you by Him Who is the All-Knowing, the All-Informed.

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<sup>10</sup> Isaiah 40:5. As the original Hebrew had been transliterated into the Persian script for publication in *Payám-i-Bahá'í*, and since I do not know Hebrew, I am grateful to Soli Shahvar for identifying the verse for me.

<sup>11</sup> Ḥakím Áqá Ján died in 1881, according to Momen (*Bahá'í Communities*, vol. 2, p. 183)

Blessed art thou, and also he who hath ascended unto God. We testify that he quaffed the living waters of eternity from the hand of the bounty of his Lord, the Most Generous. He, verily, attained to that which most people have not attained. Unto this beareth witness the Tongue of God in this sublime habitation. He set his face toward the Supreme Horizon when all others had turned away from it, save those whom God, the Ruler of the Kingdom of names, was pleased to guide. He acknowledged what the Pen proclaimed, and affirmed what was sent down from the heaven of grace by the Lord of strength and of might. We, verily, were with him at the moment of his ascension, and mentioned him with that whereby the ocean of pardon hath surged and the sweet savor of God—the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Merciful—hath wafted forth. Well is it with him, and whosoever mentioneth him after his ascension with what was sent down by the Ancient Revealer.

Glory rest on him, and also on them that have not broken the Covenant of God, the Lord of the Mighty Throne.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *Ḥadīqiy-i-ʿIrfān*, p. [159](#); provisional rendering by the present translator. This is, in fact, just an excerpt from a much longer Tablet of Bahá'u'lláh, in which He addresses several Bahá'ís one after another. The full text of the Tablet can be found in [INBA 41:34–60](#). This particular portion of the Tablet, revealed for Dr. Mihdí Khán, appears on pp. [55–56](#) of that volume.

## Original Persian Text

The original Persian text of this article appears below with a few minor edits from me.

—Adib Masumian

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## شرح حال حکیم آقا جان

یکی از نخستین مؤمنین از جامعهٔ یهودیان

در طی سال‌های دراز، هنگام سفر از آمریکا به کانادا، به ملاقات میرزا آقاخان کتیرائی (یعقوب) می‌رفتم و از سخنانشان بهره می‌بردم. یک روز از ایشان تقاضا کردم که شرح حال جد خود «حکیم آقا جان» را برای آیندگان بنویسند. این مقاله را که به قلم ایشان نگاشته شده با کمی ویراستاری تقدیم خوانندگان پیام بهائی می‌کنم.

### هوشیدر مطلق

در سال هجری ۱۲۹۵ قمری دو برادر به نام آقا محمد جواد و آقا محمد باقر نراقی در همدان زندگی می‌کردند. در آن اوقات همسر محمد جواد مریض می‌شود و مرحوم حکیم آقا جان را به عیادت او می‌برند. پس از تشخیص مرض، ایشان مقداری دارو به آن‌ها می‌دهد تا به تدریج به مریض بدهند. در آن ایام، در ایران داروخانه نبود. دارو را خود دکترها داشتند و به بیماران می‌دادند.

به اشتباه، حکیم آقا جان مقداری قرص استرکینین به بیمار می‌دهد. دو عدد از قرص‌ها را که بیمار می‌خورد، حالش بد می‌شود و به حالت نزع می‌افتد. بلافاصله حکیم آقا جان را به بالین مریض می‌برند. ایشان متوجه می‌شود که به جای قرص کینین قرص استرکینین داده است. هراسان و نگران می‌شود، زیرا فکر می‌کند آن‌ها مسلمانند و اگر مریضشان فوت کند او را خواهند کشت. ولی آقا محمد جواد با کمال رأفت به او می‌گوید: «نگران نباش، اگر ارادهٔ الهی تعلق نگیرد او نخواهد مرد، و تو را مسئول نمی‌دانیم و شکوه نمی‌کنیم.» حکیم

آقاجان از آن‌ها سؤال می‌کند: «مگر شما مسلمان نیستید؟» آن‌ها می‌گویند: «ما بهائی هستیم، و ابداً ناراحت نباشید، ولو مریض ما بمیرد.» این پیش‌آمد سبب می‌شود حکیم آقاجان در صدد تحقیق از امر بهائی برآید.

در همان ایام جناب ابن‌اصدق از خراسان به همدان آمده بودند و در منزل محمد جواد و محمد باقر جلسات تبلیغی داشتند. حکیم آقاجان در جلسات مذکور شرکت می‌کند تا منجر به تصدیق ایشان می‌شود. آن بزرگوار نخستین مؤمن یهودی در همدان بودند. ایشان پیشوای یهودیان در همدان بودند. بسیار سرشناس و بین جماعت یهود و مسلمان مقامی بزرگ داشتند. تصدیق ایشان به امر مبارک سبب هدایت نفوسی بی‌شمار از یهودیان همدان از جمله حاجی مهدی ارجمند، نویسنده کتاب گلشن حقایق شد. همسر حکیم آقاجان، طوطی خانم، بسیار مؤمن بود.

### خاطره‌ای از طوطی خانم

نگارنده نسل سوم حکیم آقاجان می‌باشم. در آن زمان من چهار پنج سال داشتم، مقابل مدرسه تأیید همدان در خانه میرزا رحمن نوری‌اف ساکن بودیم. طوطی خانم در بالاخانه آن منزل با ما زندگی می‌کرد. روزی مادرم به محفل رفته بود و من و برادر کوچکم را نزد طوطی خانم گذاشت. بعد از مدتی درب منزل به صدا آمد. من دویدم و در را باز کردم. خانمی بسیار موقر و خوش‌لباس را دیدم که گفت: «طوطی خانم را می‌خواهم.» گفتم بفرمائید. آمد جلو پله‌ها. طوطی خانم هم جلو آمد و پرسید: «چه فرمایشی دارید؟» گفت: «کار خصوصی دارم.» طوطی خانم او را به منزل دعوت کرد. آن زن به طوطی خانم گفت: «من از خوانین کولیائی هستم (کولیا منطقه‌ای است میان همدان و کردستان). از شوهرم بچه‌دار نمی‌شوم. به اصفهان و طهران رفته کلی مخارج کرده‌ام شاید بچه‌دار شوم، ولی تا به حال خداوند به من فرزندی نداده. می‌ترسم که شوهرم همسری دیگر اختیار کند. شنیده‌ام شما می‌توانید به من کمک کنید. هرگاه موفق شوم، هزار تومان به شما خواهم داد.» آن موقع هزار تومان مبلغ زیادی بود. درست به خاطر دارم طوطی خانم به اطاق دیگر رفت، وضو گرفت و دست به دعا برداشت. بعد از دعا سه چهار مرتبه گریه‌کنان گفت: «ای [حکیم] آقاجان این را از تو کوم» یعنی از تو می‌خواهم. سپس پودری سفید رنگ - من ندانستم چیست - در مقداری نان خمیر کرده، به

شکل قرص در آورد، به او داد و گفت: «این را بخور، امیدوارم خداوند به فضل خود آرزوی تو را برآورد.»

بعد از دو سه ماه روزی آن خانم با خدمه خود به منزل ما آمد، مقداری اگردک (نان مخصوصی که در روغن سرخ می کنند) مقدار زیادی کره و صد تومان پول برای طوطی خانم آورد و گفت: «من آبستن شدم.» سال بعد نیز گوسفندی را با مقدار زیادی کره و مبلغی پول برای طوطی خانم آورد و گفت: «خداوند به من پسری عنایت کرده.»

### یک خاطره دیگر از طوطی خانم

سر ظهر بود که روزی طوطی خانم به منزل ما آمد. من هم از مدرسه برای نهار آمده بودم. طوطی خانم گفت: «آمده‌ام با شماها خداحافظی کنم، چون امروز من می‌میرم.» من با شوخی به او گفتم: «ننه طوطی، نهار حلیم داریم. تا نهار نخوری نمی‌گذارم بروی.» گفت: «بچه، من باید بروم با همه خداحافظی کنم، وقت ندارم.» عصر که از مدرسه بر می‌گشتم، گفتمند طوطی خانم فوت کرده.

از حکیم آقاجان و همسرش طوطی خانم یک پسر به نام میرزا مهدی خان، (دکتر ناصرالدین شاه)، و دو دختر باقی ماند، یکی به نام طاوس خانم که مادر بزرگ نگارنده است و دیگری هاجر خانم.

مرحوم حکیم آقاجان از طرف حضرت بهاءالله مورد عنایات لاتحصی قرار گرفت و الواحی چند به افتخارش از قلم مبارک نازل شد. وقتی مریض بود، دختر برادر طوطی خانم تعریف کرد که در روز صعود حکیم آقاجان من بر بالین او مشغول باد زدن او بودم. او بیهوش در بستر خوابیده بود. ناگهان از بستر بلند شده، نشست و به من گفت: «برگرد به این طرف!» با عجله گفتم: «چرا؟» گفت: «مگر نمی‌بینی جمال مبارک تشریف می‌آورند؟» من برگشتم اما چیزی ندیدم. در این موقع مرحوم حکیم آقاجان تعظیم کرد و آیه‌ای از تورات (نیت نه نیمقلا کبود ادونای احاد وراثوکل باصار یحدایو کینینی ادونای دیبه) را خواند و به عالم جاودان شتافت. بعد از حدود دو ماه، بدون این که خبر فوت او به حضرت بهاءالله برسد، لوحی به افتخار فرزندش میرزا مهدی خان نازل شد که در آن لوح می‌فرمایند هنگام صعود حکیم آقاجان، ما با او بودیم.



«إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَهُ حِينَ صَعُودِهِ وَذَكَرْنَا بِمَا مَاجَ بَحْرُ الْغَفْرَانِ.» (حضرت بهاءالله)

ما هنگام صعودش با او بودیم و یادش نمودیم، یادی که به آن دریای بخشش به موج آمد.

لوحی که پس از صعود حکیم آقاجان به افتخار فرزندشان دکتر مهدی خان نازل شد:

يا قلم اذْكُرْ مَنْ سُمِّيَ بمهدى لِيَفْرَحَ ويكون من الشَّاكرين. يا مهدى اسْمِعِ النَّدَاءَ الَّذِي ارتفع من هذا المقام الاعلى من سدرة الحمراء. إِنَّهُ لَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا هُوَ الْفَرْدُ الْوَاحِدُ الْعَلِيمُ الْخَبِيرُ. إِنَّ الَّذِينَ نَقَضُوا مِيثَاقَ اللَّهِ وَعَهْدَهُ اُولَئِكَ مِنَ الْاَخْسَرِينَ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ. قل يا قوم قد جاء اليومُ و الْقِيَوْمُ ينادى باسمه المقتدر العظيم. إِيَّاكُمْ أَنْ تَمْنَعَكُمْ ما عند الجهلاء عن الافق الاعلى و خذوا ما أُوتِيتُمْ من لدنِ عَلِيمٍ خَبِيرٍ. طوبى لك و لمن صعد الى الله. نشهد أَنَّهُ شَرِبَ كَوْتَرَ الْبَقَاءِ من يد عطاء رَبِّهِ الْكَرِيمِ. إِنَّهُ فَازَ بِمَا لَا فَازَ بِهِ أَكْثَرُ الْخَلْقِ. يشهد بذلك لسانُ اللَّهِ فِي هَذَا الْمَقَامِ الرَّفِيعِ. أَقْبَلَ إِلَى الْاَفْقِ الْاَعْلَى إِذْ أَعْرَضَ عَنْهُ الْوَرَى إِلَّا مِنْ شَاءِ اللَّهِ مَالِكُ مَلَكُوتِ الْاَسْمَاءِ، وَ اعْتَرَفَ بِمَا نَطَقَ بِهِ الْقَلَمُ وَ أَقَرَّ بِمَا نَزَلَ مِنْ سَمَاءِ الْفَضْلِ مِنْ لَدُنِ مَقْتَدِرٍ قَدِيرٍ. إِنَّا كُنَّا مَعَهُ حِينَ صَعُودِهِ وَ ذَكَرْنَا بِمَا مَاجَ بَحْرُ الْغَفْرَانِ وَ هَاجَ بِهِ عَرَفُ عَنَايَةِ اللَّهِ الْغَفُورِ الرَّحِيمِ. طوبى له و لِمَنْ ذَكَرَهُ بَعْدَ صَعُودِهِ بِمَا نَزَلَ مِنْ لَدُنِ مُنْزَلٍ قَدِيمٍ. الْبِهَاءُ عَلَيْهِ وَ عَلَى الَّذِينَ مَا نَقَضُوا عَهْدَ اللَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَرْشِ الْعَظِيمِ.

(حديقة عرفان، صفحه ۱۵۹)