

Home of Nisha Khan
Acca, Syria

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Dear friends!

In the sacred silence of the Holy Tomb of Baha-O-llah, in the Blessed Presence of Abdul Baha, on this beautiful Christmas day we remembered and prayed for you. Although you were very far in body, yet you were very near in spirit. The day was perfectly cloudless, the azure heaven was a deep blue vault and the weather was bracing and cool. A more perfect sunlit day, a more perfect moonlit and starlit night one's heart could not wish for. It was one of those fairy days one reads in fairy books. Our hearts leaped forth with the joy of living and with the privilege of possessing the knowledge of the matchless harmony of Truth. With fresh zeal and the fervency of spirit we prayed for the early establishment of the Kingdom of God upon earth, the bringing about of Millennium and the hoisting of the Banner of Justice and Mercy. For the winning of this heavenly Prize humanity must put forward an extraordinary effort, a self-denial which shall be high and a sincerity which shall be deep. It has ever been through our own negligence and heedlessness that so far the wise and consummate Plan of God has not founded its throne in the hearts of mankind. We hope the bitter lessons learned during the latter half of this year will pave the way for final defeat of the prince of war and bloodshed and the reign of Peace and good will be inaugurated in all parts of the world. Man must divest himself of the garments of selfishness, greed, rapacity and sin and put on the robes of disinterestedness, consecration, self-immolation and sanctity. He must be clothed with the qualities and character of the Creator and an image and likeness of God. It carries with it its own evidence that in this age, in this epoch the world needs the "overcoming man", the "masterful man", the man with the rich treasures of heart and soul - in other words the "spiritual man". In our mad race after material things we have forgotten the things of the spirit. Our educational system has fallen into the clasp of materially-minded men and thus they have neglected the cultivation of our higher and nobler nature. We are now

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facing the same critical problems, the same unhinging of social relations, the same political and religious darkness as the Greek and Roman civilizations found themselves when Jesus Christ, like unto a brilliant sun shone forth from the horizon of Galilee. With his epiphany the old ages was brought to an end and a new age ushered in, the old order of things destroyed and a new order of things established in the hearts of men. During his days of ministry he clearly promised us that he shall come again a second time and then the knowledge of the Lord will fill the whole earth as the waters cover the sea. These literalists who expect his second coming to be followed by angelic hosts, blaring of trumpets will be sadly mistaken for he said he will come as a thief in the night. What was particularly noticeable about his first coming? He came quietly and went away almost secretly. In like manner has been his second coming in this glorious Dispensation, the comforting knowledge of which although spread in all parts of the world is still limited to the disciples. The Bible believe fully that the clear prophecies in the Bible concerning the second coming of Christ are all fulfilled and we must cleanse the ears of our understanding from the dust of theology and church interpretations to comprehend this grand truth. Then it will dawn upon us that we are living in the days that the Spirit of Christ is again manifest in the temple of humanity, that the same fountain is flowing, the same sun is shining and the same heavenly Bestowals are granted. When we have realized fully that we are living in the glorious Age of Millennium, that we are existing in the century of Light, that through our deeds and words we are helping to knit humanity closer then we shall not sit still nor will we carp on the faults and mistakes of others. Ours will be the pleasure to herald this Cause and voice this Call and awaken our fellowmen to the mysteries and realities of the New Heaven and the New Earth. We will sing the new song, walk in the new highway and join the new ^{company} ^{coming} who have freed themselves from the fetters of traditions and dogmas. Reinforced by their presence and companionship we shall dispel the dense clouds of ignorance and superstition which has

enshrouded the world. Amidst the encircling gloom, with the leading of the kindly Light we shall wage a noble fight and win the crown of victory. We shall break through the armies of the Prince of darkness and put to flight the soldiers of errors and transgressions. Ours is the confirmation of the Kingdom of Allah and the sanctified Power of Abdul Baha. With this invulnerable weapon there will be no discomfiture on our part. Of this we are certain.

These thoughts flushed through my mind while I sat quiet and silent this afternoon in the Holy Shrine of the Blessed Beauty. Besides the Master there were only three worshippers - Aga Sayali, Khosro and Ahmed. For more than two hours we sat there, the Beloved immersed in the sea of adoration. When he arose we felt his power and majesty and before leaving he perfumed our nostrils with the fragrance of the altar of rose. From early morning till noon he called on many many Christian families to wish them a happy and joyous Xmas, even in the afternoon before leaving for Bahajee he called on a few more families, dropping no one from his long list.

At 8 P.M. he sent for the believers who had gathered in the lower room and he was just going to speak when the Commissioner of Police entered and his presence naturally changed the current of the Beloved's talk. Later on Tahseem Bey, the commander and the military governor of Hauran with his attaché and other prominent citizens called and stayed till 11 o'clock. For an hour he spoke about criminology and that the prime object of the wardens of Prisons and Penitentiaries must be correction and education and not revenge and punishment. As long as humanity is in the cradle, ^{in fact} state these corrective measures are necessary to safeguard the society from anarchistic outbreaks and lawlessness. It is hoped however that moral education and enlightenment will do away with vices and crimes to the extent that man may consider the committing of a crime as the greatest punishment. The ideal set before us is, therefore, perfection in all the qualities and attributes - intellectual, spiritual, and physical - a perfect man or woman in the image and likeness of God.