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A BRIEF ACCOUNT
OF THE
BAHAI MOVEMENT

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By **Ethel J. Rosenberg**

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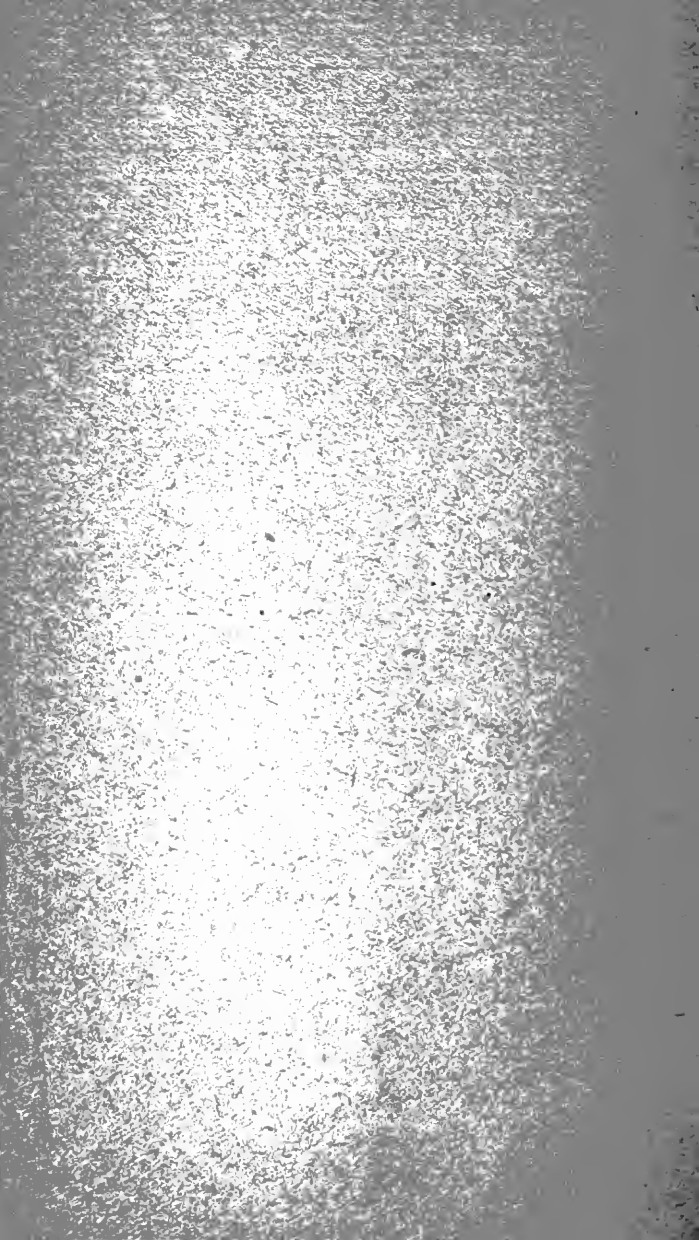
A Brief Account
of
The Bahai Movement

BY ETHEL J. ROSENBERG

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9

A Brief Account of the Bahai Movement.

BY

ETHEL J. ROSENBERG.

*Watchman, what of the night? . . .
The morning cometh.*



MANY believe that we, in this century, are witnessing the dawn of a new spiritual epoch or era.

A renewal of the Spirit is making itself felt in the Churches and in the religious and social life of all lands. This is in harmony with the teachings of the Bahais, and of their Great Leaders, now represented by Abdul Baha the 'Servant of God,' known to the outside world as Abbas Effendi. Once again, the Light is shining forth from that land which may indeed be called the

Holy Land: for have not its valleys and hills been trodden from the beginning by the feet of those great Messengers inspired of God—Abraham, Elijah, and last and greatest, Jesus of Nazareth? Is it strange that once more in this century of ours, in this 'the cradle of the race,' those that were sitting "in darkness have seen a Great Light," the light of the Sun of Righteousness that rises with healing in his wings?

This great teacher, Abdul Baha—by birth a Persian—was, until 1908, for forty years a prisoner, confined by the order of the Turkish Government within the walls of Akka (or Acre, to use the name more familiar to the West) on account of his religious teachings, which were considered subversive of, and antagonistic to the faith of Islam.

In order to make these statements intelligible to those who have not before heard of this great religious movement which is flooding the East with new light and life, it will be necessary to give a slight sketch of its history.

In 1819 A.D., in the city of Shiraz, in Persia, a child was born named Mirza Ali Mohammad. His Father a wool merchant died while the child was yet an infant; he was brought up by his maternal uncle, and given the ordinary education of a Persian youth in his position. From

childhood Ali Mohammad was renowned for his piety and virtue, his courteous manner, and the beauty of his person.

When this young man attained the age of twenty-four, he announced to some of the principal men of learning and virtue of his country that he was the bearer of a message from God, and from that time assumed the title of "Bab," or door, by which name he became generally known. He is now universally referred to as "the Bab."

He became the forerunner and founder of a great religious movement, which is destined to quicken the Western world, as it is now quickening the East, and to bring the two into unity and harmony.

From the hour of this announcement he obtained a hearing, and in a short while gained a very large following, both among the cultivated and learned of his countrymen, and among the common people.

The rapid spread of his teachings began seriously to alarm the more fanatical of the Persian Mohammedan teachers or Mullahs. Through their intrigues and at their instigation he was at last seized and thrown into prison, and finally shot at Tabriz, in July, 1850 A.D., six years after he had declared his mission.

The Mullahs were determined, if possible, to

stamp out and destroy what they considered to be a dangerous heresy; they therefore imprisoned and executed all of the leading Babis, as they were called, upon whom they could lay hands.

The Bab's doctrines were simple. He came, he said, not to uproot and destroy but to urge a more whole-hearted keeping of the grand teachings of his race. He declared that the Koran was not final. He taught a pure faith in the One God, inculcated a high morality, and asserted that women were the equals of men, and had a right to education. He appointed eighteen chief followers or disciples, one of whom was a woman, the far-famed and beautiful Kurru-t' ul-Ayn (i.e. Consolation of the Eyes) a poetess, leader, and teacher, to whom he gave the title of Tahereh, or the Pure One, and who finally suffered martyrdom about two years after the Bab's death.

He called these disciples "Letters of the Living," he himself forming the nineteenth of this hierarchy. Throughout the writings of the Bab the number nineteen is considered especially sacred, for reasons too long to detail here.¹

The greater part of the teachings and writings of the Bab referred to a Coming Great One, "He whom God would manifest," who would reveal the light of Truth in its full splendour, and would declare himself after nineteen years.¹

¹Readers are referred to the Beyan.

The Bab constantly exhorted his followers not to reject this Great One when he appeared, as has been the custom of former religions and peoples upon the advent of a new prophet.

Two years after the Bab's death, in 1852 A.D., a young fanatical Babi whose mind had become somewhat unbalanced through grief—owing to his master, a Babi, having been martyred for his faith—fired at the Shah with a fowling-piece. He was seized, and instantly put to death. This unfortunate act gave the Mullahs a pretext for their reiterated statements that the Bab's teachings were not religious, but political, and dangerous to the Government. All the leading Babis were seized and imprisoned, and many of them put to death. Then commenced that terrible outburst of persecution, torture, and martyrdom, for which there is scarcely to be found a parallel in history. The number of these martyrs is variously estimated at from thirty to fifty thousand souls—men, women, and children.

Among the Babis imprisoned at this time was a young and wealthy Persian nobleman, who was considered by the Government to be a prominent leader of the movement. On account of his benevolence he was called, in Teheran, the "Father of the Poor." Afterwards he became universally known as Baha'u'llah (i.e. "The Glory of God"). Baha'u'llah was con-

fined in a dungeon with a heavy chain about his neck, attached thus to five other Babis, for a period of four months.

The Government, however, being quite unable to substantiate any charge against him, released him, and having confiscated his property, banished him with his family and a few followers to Baghdad, beyond the borders of Persia and under the jurisdiction of the Sultan. In that neighbourhood he resided for about eleven years. It was during this period that he withdrew for two years to the solitude of the mountains: even his friends did not know the place of his retreat. It was then that the greatness of his message began to be realized by the distraught people, and when he returned to them, they gathered around him as a leader. Men of culture and learning came great distances to consult with him, until the Mullahs, again becoming alarmed at the amazing spread of this faith, persuaded the Persian Government through their intrigues and misrepresentations to demand of the Sultan that Baha'u'llah should be summoned to Constantinople. He was therefore obliged to set out for that city with his family and immediate followers in April, 1863 A.D.

Before the journey Baha'u'llah encamped for twelve days in the garden of Najil Pasha, at a short distance from Baghdad, and there revealed

to his eldest son Abdul Baha and a few chosen friends that he was the promised 'Manifestation,' the "Coming One" of whom the Bab had spoken. He made this declaration nineteen years after the Bab had declared his mission.

After some months' residence in Constantinople, the Ottoman Government banished Baha'u'llah and his companions to Adrianople—this city being selected chiefly on account of its greater remoteness from Persia. There they lived for three or four years—the faith constantly spreading—until in 1868 A.D. they were once more exiled, this time to Akka. The immediate cause of their removal was a disturbance which had been created by Subh-i-Ezel, a half-brother to Baha'u'llah, who endeavoured to claim the leadership of the faith, and to displace Baha'u'llah.

Akka was selected because, being the chief fortress and military station in the north of Palestine, it was the place to which political suspects and criminals of the worst type were sent. It was extremely unhealthy, and it was probably thought by the authorities that these poor exiles, about seventy in number, would not long survive their imprisonment within its walls.

For two years after their arrival they were confined in *two rooms* in the barracks, and many fell ill of typhoid and dysentery, but through the

devoted nursing of Abdul Baha and a few helpers all but six recovered. The charge to the Governor stated that they were murderers, Nihilists, and thieves, and that they must be allowed no liberty or concessions of any sort. After incredible hardships, and the death of a young son caused by a fall from the roof of the prison-building where he had gone to meditate, Baha'u'llah, with his family, was at last permitted to take a house in the town. Here he was confined in one room for seven years; but through the nobility of their lives and characters, the prisoners won the increasing respect and sympathy of the successive Governors of Akka, and were gradually allowed to become prisoners on parole, and given permission to reside anywhere within a radius of about eighteen miles. After this Baha'u'llah lived for the greater part of the time in a house at a short distance from Akka called Bah-je, also he frequently stayed in Haifa and on Mount Carmel, close to the renowned Cave of Elijah.

On May 28, 1892 A.D., at the age of seventy-five years, he departed this life, in full possession of his faculties and powers. Before his death he told his followers, both by word and in writing, that after his departure they must "turn their faces" towards his eldest son Abdul Baha, the "Greatest Branch" who was one with himself.

At the end of January, 1901, it was my great privilege to visit Abdul Baha Abbas, who was then living in Haifa,¹ and superintending the construction of a building upon Mount Carmel commonly spoken of as the "Tomb of the Bab," which is also probably destined to be the resting-place of the body of Baha'u'llah, as well as, eventually, that of Abdul Baha. It will also be a House of Praise and meeting place for the Friends from all parts of the world.

One of the distinct features of this movement is the acceptance of the great world Teachers or Prophets as 'Manifestations' of the one Divine Light, the one Holy Spirit of God. They are therefore, *one in essence*, though their teachings may differ in detail owing to the various conditions and needs of the peoples and nations to whom they are sent. All through the ages these Leaders have appeared, in the great Cycles of the world's sorrow and difficulty. There have been such in the past, there will be such in the future. Of this order was the Bab, who, as we have seen, before his martyrdom prophesied that another and a Greater would come, "He whom

¹ Some three months after my visit, Abdul-Baha was again confined within the walls of Akka, by order of the Ottoman Government, and remained there for another seven years, till the year 1908 saw liberty given to all religious prisoners under Turkish rule.

God would Manifest." This prophecy was fulfilled in the person of Baha'u'llah (the Splendour of God) after whom his followers were named Bahais. The word Baha (the Divine Glory) is the word used in chapter LX. verses 1 and 19 and chapter XL. verse 5 of Isaiah, which is translated in the English Bible, the Glory of the Lord.¹

Baha'u'llah, before he departed this life, declared, in his turn, that the work would be developed and carried on by his eldest son, Abdul Baha, whose name means 'the Servant of God.' To the outside world he has been generally known as Abbas Effendi. Abdul Baha, who until September 1908 was retained a prisoner under the Turkish Government at Akka, thus completes this marvellous triad of Prophets.

In order to realize the position occupied in this teaching by the Prophet, it is necessary to distinguish him from a philosopher or other great type of teacher. He is essentially one who arises in a crisis of the world's history to inaugurate a new cycle of truth, and to declare a Revelation. He is charged with a special message to the age. The Bahais believe a prophet to be a perfect vehicle for the manifestation of the Light of the

¹ According to the Bahai teaching this Divine Glory is as a Light in every one, which glory must be made to shine—This is the same as the teaching of Christ.

Holy Spirit, that 'Light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.'

Types of the greatest of these world prophets are Moses, Buddha, and Jesus the Christ. It has been shown us again and again that what is most striking in the teachings of these great ones is not so much that they announced new ideas; but that they, in themselves, gathered up into one clear whole the various rays of the Sun of Truth, which is ever illuminating the world; that just as a lens, or burning glass, gathers together the rays of sunlight into one powerful beam, so they become a focus, an effulgent Centre for the scattered light of truth. For truth itself is ever one and the same essence of Reality: though partially and differently apprehended, according to the various capacities and developments of human beings. The prophets declare again the source of the One Religion—under their influence a Renewal takes place. This teaching is founded on that underlying fact of all existence, the Unity of God. It is a pure and ardent Universalism, centering all faiths on what is known in the West as the doctrine of the Logos. The same Power that anointed Jesus of Nazareth, anointed in their degree and for their age and work, all the prophets who have spoken the Word of the Lord.

The Bahais point to four signs by which the

Great Prophets may be known. In the first place they come in the time of the world's great need—often in direct fulfilment of prophecy; secondly they are known by their pure and stainless lives, absolutely devoted to the service of humanity; thirdly, in their mouth God has put his Living Word, a word of such power that its quality is felt at once and arrests the attention of the most careless—it is the utterance of the thought of God. Fourthly the Prophet is known by his power—a power to so transform the minds and souls of those who seek his help, that it is acknowledged without recourse to proof by miracles.

The age in which a Prophet lives on earth is an age of enormous change and progress. His appearance affects all the regions of phenomenal being. Abdul Baha compares the coming of the Great Prophets into the world (their 'Day' as it is called in the Old Testament) to the rising and setting of the sun.

Just as the rising of the sun chases away darkness and floods the earth with light, so does the rising of the heavenly sun of the prophet above the horizon of humanity flood the world with light. As long as His teachings in their purity shine upon mankind, the world is illuminated; but as through the lapse of time they become forgotten, misunderstood, and obscured,

the night once more returns, until at its darkest period we may again expect the coming of the dawn, and once more the sun of truth arises in a special manifestation of the Holy Spirit.

Abdul Baha teaches that the object of the renewed revelation of truth is that we may attain the truer knowledge of God that the world is ever seeking, and acquire those virtues which enable us to live a life of complete harmony and brotherhood with the whole human race. Baha'u'llah wrote: "The religion of God . . . was revealed from the heaven of the will of the King of Eternity, only for the furtherance of unity and harmony among the people of the world. Do not make of it the cause of contest and discord. Religion and the Divine Laws are the greatest cause and means of the appearance and effulgence of the glorious orb of unity, as well as of the development of the world, the training of nations, the tranquility of the people, and the peace of all countries."

When Baha'u'llah was asked what was his particular mission to the world, and the necessity for his appearance, he replied, that he had not come to teach the nations a new ethic, for through their prophets and teachers they already knew the difference between right and wrong; but that his mission was *to unite all the faiths and peoples of the world into one.*

“These ruinous wars, these fruitless strifes must cease: and the Most Great Peace shall come! Let not a man so glory in this, that he loves his country: but let him rather glory in this, that he loves his kind!”

If only a means could be found to break down the barriers of race, of creed, of prejudice, what a boon it would be to the world! Bahais declare that in this revelation all the expectations of various faiths are fulfilled, and that the way is open to a great mutual recognition that we are, indeed, all children of the Supreme, and that the world is entering upon an inheritance that has been foretold by the prophets since the beginning of time. A world-consciousness is arising, that will cause all the nations to think and to act like one man.

Many will say Christianity teaches the brotherhood of all mankind, and love and compassion in the highest degree. But, are these great teachings being realized to-day? A practical bond of union is needed between East and West, some common meeting ground for the Christian, the Mohammedan, the Buddhist, etc.: which will *create* the sense of ‘brotherhood’ and make of it a realised experience. To sit at Abdul Baha’s table, in his simple home, with Christians, Mohammedans, Jews, and those of other faiths, all of them breathing forth the spirit

of living brotherhood, is a privilege not readily forgotten.¹ To quote the words of Abdul Baha:—“The Manifestation of Divinity and the dawning of the Light of the Invisible is for the education of souls . . . so that the earthly may become God-like, the darkened minds illumined, and the uninstructed familiar with the mystery of the Kingdom: . . . that the barbarian may give up his ferocity, the cruel become forbearing, and that pitiless savages may come to live in peace. If these divine graces do not appear among men the bounty of the Divine Manifestation is fruitless, and the splendour of the Sun of Truth without effect.”

In the book of Akdas and other works, special social teachings were given by Baha'u'llah to his people. It is commanded by him that every follower, no matter in what condition of life, he may be born, should practice some trade, art or profession; that he should engage in some employment or occupation beneficial to society as well as to himself. Begging or mendicity is strictly forbidden, but it is directed that the community must provide work for all who need it.

It takes but little reflection to see what a revo-

¹ *It was my privilege to remain as a guest in the household of Abdul Baha, from April 21, 1904, until December 24, 1904. During these eight months I received full and invaluable teachings from him :-E. J. R.*

lution it would cause in present conditions if this command were followed; and how many present-day difficulties would be solved by these simple regulations. It is also commanded that the best education possible to be obtained shall be given to every child, male and female; for in the words of Baha'u'llah, "All knowledge is of God, therefore it is incumbent on you to know." Again he says "He who takes a child to educate, be it his own son, or the son of another, it is as though he educated the Son of God." How entirely the condition of the East will be changed by this injunction as to universal education, which will be one means for bringing into effect the Bab's teaching of the perfect equality between men and women.

Among the followers of Baha'u'llah there is to be no separate priesthood or ministry, regarded as a class apart from the general body of the believers: for Baha'u'llah teaches that most of the errors in former faiths have crept in through the teachings of the priests, who were considered to possess secret authoritative knowledge, not shared by the generality of people. Bahais build Houses of Praise, but all ceremonial rites and forms of worship have been abrogated, save that of prayer, which being the very heart and essence of spiritual religion has been made obligatory upon all believers. Nevertheless Abdul

Baha has said that "every symbol is good that is uniting the heart to God."

It is forbidden that men and women should live the lives of hermits, or in secluded brotherhoods, as by so doing they are prevented from their social duties to the rest of humanity, and from self-development. Marriage when possible, is enjoined upon all, as being the highest estate for man—in contradistinction to other faiths which have taught that the celibate state was the highest.

War or strife of any kind is absolutely prohibited. This is insisted upon again and again, and repeated in varying forms as being the very foundation of brotherhood. Abdul Baha says: "One of the most severe of the world's diseases is that of contention and strife, the fire of which is burning among all nations. This cannot be removed except through the Word of God. This intense fire can only be quenched by heavenly water." Non-resistance to violence is enjoined upon all Bahais, but they must regard it as a duty to protect the weak and helpless—in the words of Baha'u'llah—"If ye be slain for God's good pleasure, verily it is better for you than that ye should slay."

It is directed that all minor regulations of the faith, the administration of charitable funds, the provision of education for orphan children, and

such matters, are to be in the hands of elected bodies or councils called "Houses of Justice," which are to consist of not less than nine members, men distinguished for their learning and upright life, chosen by the general body of believers.

Such teachings as these enlighten not only Eastern countries, but also the nations of the West. Truth is universal. Abdul Baha says that truth cannot be partial. Just as it is impossible for the sun to illuminate one country, and leave the neighbouring one in darkness, so it is impossible for the Sun of Truth to arise for some nations and not for all.

Abdul Baha further points out that owing to the developed means of communication, it is now for the first time possible in the history of the world for the light of the prophet and of his teachings to appeal at once to the whole earth; flashing as "lightning which appeareth from the East and shineth unto the West," to use the prophetic words of the New Testament.

Abdul Baha writes: "Love is the real magnet which attracts the hearts and souls of men, therefore the purpose of the Manifestations of God is to radiate the light of Love from their hearts. All the divine Prophets taught this truth . . . We who are servants of the Threshold must exert our utmost power, devote our lives, and

offer them up if necessary, giving our time and all that we have to this cause, until this light be spread all over the world . . . the essential thing is love . . . All else save love is merely empty words.”

Fuller particulars of the Literature and work of this movement may be had from the Hon. Secretary of the Bahai meetings, 10, Cheniston Gardens, Wright's Lane, High St. Kensington, London.

The following quotations from the ‘Supreme Pen’ of Baha’u’llah, give an insight into the power of this teaching. The examples from Abdul Baha are from letters or Tablets sent by him to followers in all parts of the world, and from some of his published Discourses. The power of this teaching which is rather a widening of the basis of our faith than a ‘new religion,’ is seen by the enormous increase of its adherents year by year, without any organisation which can be called a proselytising body.

EXTRACTS FROM BOOKS AND WRITINGS
OF BAHĀ'U'LLĀH AND ABDUL BAHĀ

1. "Religion is the greatest instrument for the order of the world and the tranquility of all existing things."

2. "Religion is the necessary connection which emanates from the reality of things; and as the Universal Manifestations of God are aware of the mysteries of beings, therefore they understand this essential connection, and by their knowledge establish the Law of God."

3. "In every country or government where any of this community reside, they must behave towards that government with faithfulness, trustfulness, and truthfulness. It is obligatory and incumbent on the people of the world in general to assist this most Great Cause—which has descended from the heaven of the Will of the King of Pre-existence—so that perchance the fire of animosity which is ablaze in the hearts of some of the nations may be quenched through the water of Divine Wisdom and Lordly commands and exhortations, and that the light of union and accord may irradiate and illuminate the regions of the world."

1. From the "Words of Paradise," Bahā' u' llāh.

2. From "Some Answered Questions," by Abdul Baha (publ. Kegan Paul).

3. From "The Glad Tidings," Bahā' u' llāh.

4. "The Ministers (or members) of the House of Justice must promote 'The most Great Peace' in order that the world may be freed from onerous expenditure. This matter is obligatory and indispensable, for warfare and conflict are the foundation of trouble and distress."

"All must adhere to the means which are conducive to love and unity."

5. "We exhort the members of the House of Justice and command them to guard and protect the servants,¹ maid-servants, and children. They must under all circumstances have regard for the interests of the servants.² Blessed is the prince who succours a captive, the rich one who favours the needy, the just man who assures the right of the wronged one from the oppressor, and the trustee who performs what he is commanded by the Pre-existent Commander."

6. "The light of man is justice, quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny."

7. "Schools must first train the children in the principles of religion . . . but this in such a measure that it may not injure the children by leading to fanaticism and bigotry."

4. From "The Tablet of the World," Baha' u' llah.

5. The "Words of Paradise," Baha' u' llah.

¹ & ² Servants of God, i.e., men and women generally.

6. and 7. From the "Words of Paradise," Baha' u' llah.

8. "Knowledge is like unto wings for the being of man and is as a ladder for ascending. It is incumbent upon all to acquire knowledge of those sciences which may profit the people of the earth, but not of such sciences as begin and end merely in words. The possessors of sciences and arts have a great claim upon the people of the world."

9. "The kings — may God assist them — or the counsellors of the world, must consult together, and appoint one of the existing languages, or a new language, and instruct the children therein in all the schools of the world, and the same must be done in respect to writing¹ also. In such case the earth will be as one."

10. "It is incumbent on every one of you to engage in some employment, such as arts, trades and the like. We have made this, your occupation, identical with the worship of God, the True One."

11. "Charity is beloved and acceptable before God, and is accounted the chief among all good deeds. Blessed is he who prefers his brother before himself."

8. from the "Tajalliyat."

9. From "The Glad Tidings," Baha' u' llah.

¹ i.e., the characters employed must be similar for all languages.

10. and 12. From the "Glad Tidings."

11. From the "Words of Paradise,"

12. "Oh people of Baha; Ye are day-springs of love, and dawning-places of the providence of God. Defile not the tongue with cursing or execrating any one, and guard your eyes against that which is not worthy. . . . Be not the cause of sorrow, much less of sedition and strife. . . . Ye are all leaves of one tree and drops of one sea."

13. "Oh friends, it is the wish of Abdul Baha that the Friends may establish general unity. . . . We are all servants at one Threshold, waves of one sea, drops of one stream, and plants of one garden. . . . The beloved of God must be friendly even with strangers. To organize assemblies is praiseworthy, but these must be established for certain objects. For example assemblies for teaching Truth, gatherings for diffusing the Fragrances of God, gatherings for the relief of orphans, for the protection of the poor, and for the spread of learning. In a word there must be gatherings for matters which concern the well-being of man, such as the organization of societies for commerce, for the development of arts and industries, and for the expansion of agriculture. I trust all the Friends from the East and the West will come to rest in the same assembly, adorn one gathering, and show forth all heavenly attributes in the world of humanity."

13. "From an epistle of Abdul Baha, addressed to Believers in Persia, July 4th, 1906.

COMMUNES AND PRAYERS

COMMUNE¹

O my God! Give me Knowledge, Faith and Love.

Adorn my head, O God, with the crown of Thy Providence:

My heart with the light of knowing Thee:
My tongue with the utterance of Thy
Greatest Name:

And mine ear with listening to Thy
Holy Word:

For Thou art the One whose Action was, is, and ever shall be glorified, and whose commands shall ever be obeyed.

O God! Help me to be just. Lift me up from the ocean of superstitions and imaginations, and grant me a penetrating sight to see and realize from surrounding existence Thy Oneness and Thy Truth.

SUPPLICATION¹

O my God! Make Thy Beauty to be my food and let Thy Presence be my drink: Let my trust be in Thy Will, and my deeds according to Thy Command: Let my service be acceptable to Thee, and my action a praise to Thee: Let my help come only from Thee, and ordain my home to be Thy Mansion, boundless and holy.

Thou art the Precious, the Ever-present, the Loving.

PRAYER OF REPENTANCE²

O Thou Almighty! I am a sinner, but Thou art the Forgiver. I am full of shortcomings, but Thou art the Compassionate. I am in the darkness of error, but Thou art the Light of Pardon.

Therefore, O Thou Benevolent God, forgive Thou my sins, grant Thou Thy Gift, overlook my faults, bestow Thou a shelter, immerse me in the Fountain of Thy Patience and heal me of all sickness and disease.

Purify and sanctify me, give me a portion from the outpouring of holiness, so that sorrow and sadness may vanish, joy and happiness may descend, despondency and hopelessness may be changed into cheerfulness and trustfulness, and let courage take the place of fear.

Verily Thou art the Forgiver, the Compassionate, Thou art the Generous, the Beloved.

 COMMUNE OF HEALING¹

(repeat nine times)

O my God! Thy Name is my healing: Thy Remembrance is my remedy: Thy Love is my companion: Thy Mercy is my need and my aid in the world and in the Day of Judgment. Verily, Thou art the Knower, the Wise.

PRAYER FOR UNITY¹

O my God! O my God! Unite the hearts of Thy servants, and reveal to them Thy Great Purpose. May they follow Thy commandments and abide in Thy Law. Help them, O God, in their endeavor, and grant them strength to serve Thee. O God, leave them not to themselves, but guide their steps by the light of Knowledge, and cheer their hearts by Thy Love. Verily Thou art their Helper and their Lord.

SUPPLICATION¹

Hold Thou my right arm, O God! and dwell continually with me. Guide me to the Fountain of Thy Knowledge, and encircle me with Thy Glory. Set thine Angels on my right hand, and open my eyes to Thy Splendour. Let mine ears hearken to Thy melodious Tone, and comfort me with Thy Presence. For Thou art the strength of my heart, and the trust of my Soul, and I desire no one beside Thee.

COMMUNE¹

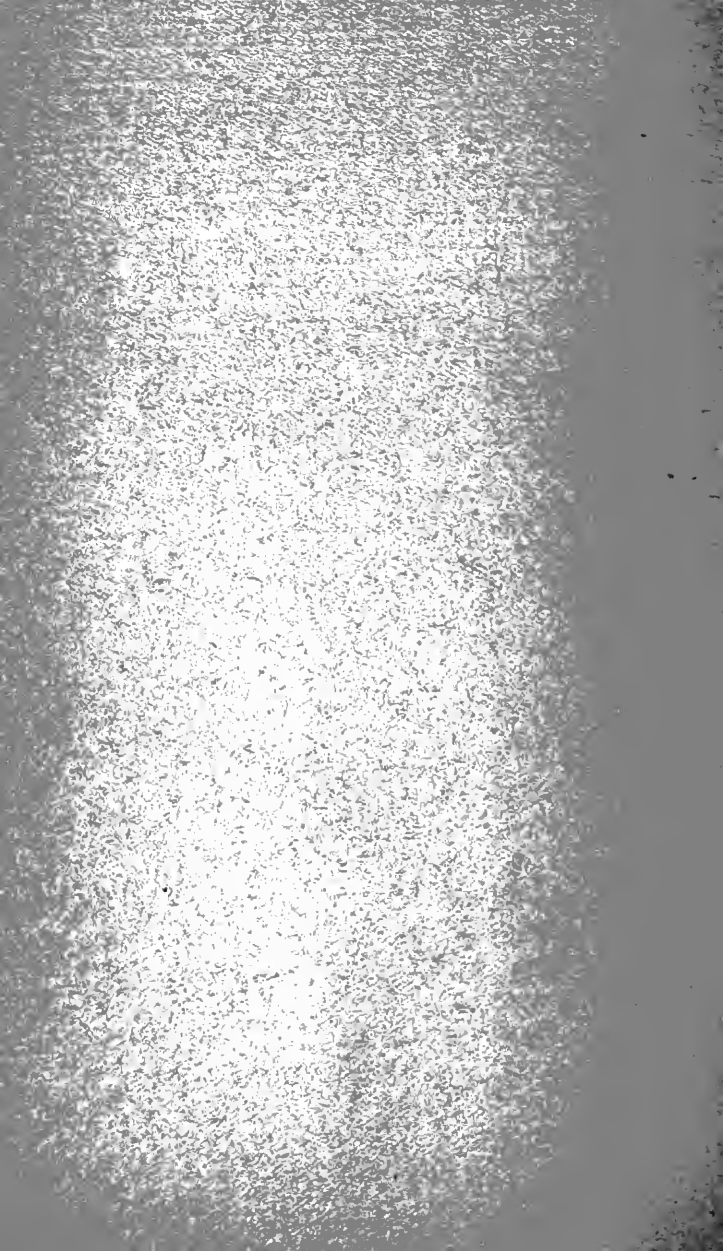
O my God; Thy Nearness is my hope, and to commune with Thee is my joy: Thy Love is my Comfort: Thy Name is my prayer: Thy Presence is my Peace: Thy Word is my healing: Thy Mercy is my light: And to serve before Thee is my utmost desire.

O my God! I ask Thee — by Thy Name, which strengthened those who learned of Thee to soar in the atmosphere of Thy Knowledge, and which brought the righteous to Thy Sanctuary—to reveal Thyself to me and to help me to look ever more to Thy Beauty.

O my Lord! This is he who has severed himself from all save Thee, hoping to draw near unto Thee. O Thou, my Beloved! Give unto me Thy sign of assurance to guard me from the doubts of the wandering. Thou art my Helper, the Powerful, the Mighty.

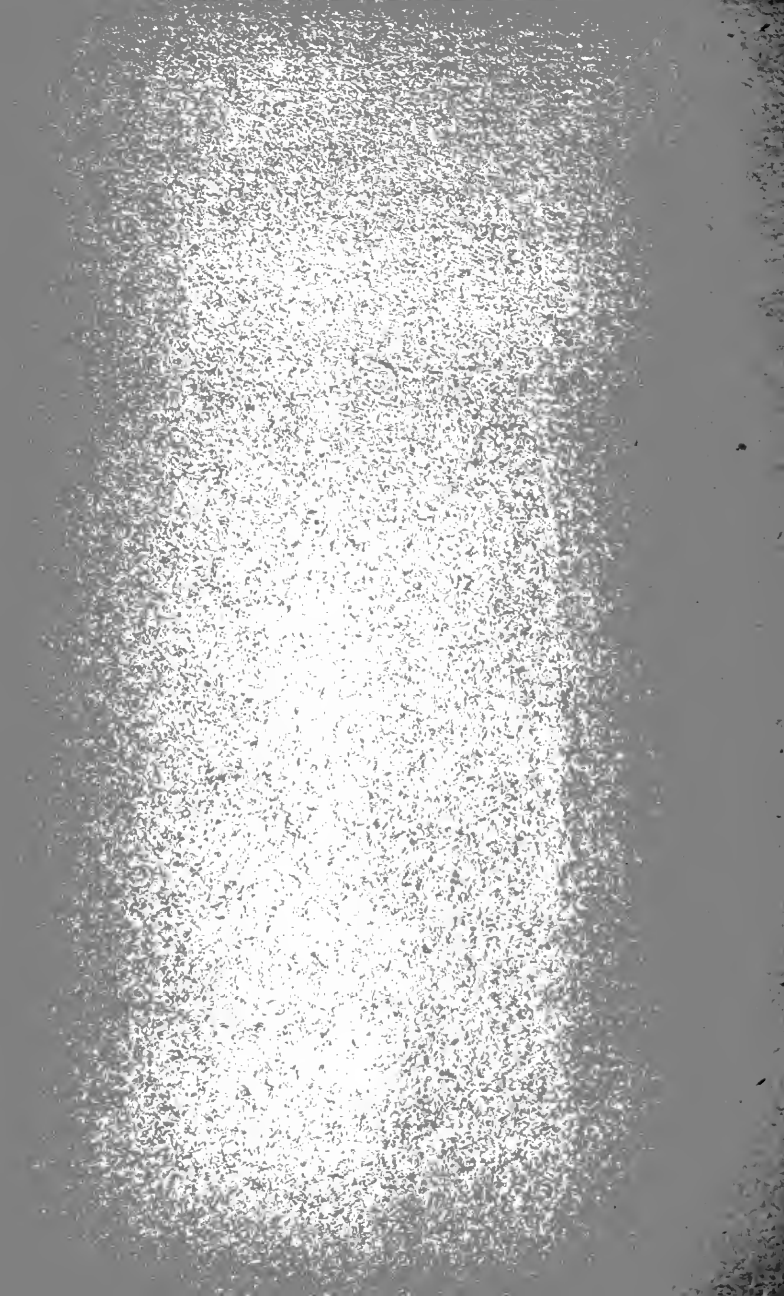
¹ Written by Baha' u' llah. ² Written by Abdul Baha.





To those who wish to learn more of the Bahai Revelation the following books are to be recommended:—

- | | |
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| The Hidden Words, Communes and Prayers
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