

Extract from a Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! The news of the ascension of his honour Áqá Músá was a source of grief and sorrow, while the problems caused by his former spouse added further to the despondency thus engendered. That the late Áqá Músá was a Bahá’í is famed throughout the East and West, and known to the government. There is no doubt about the matter...

As for the letters of Áqá Músá that were in the possession of Áqá Mírzá Haydar-‘Alí, since a considerable time hath now elapsed, these have been lost.

The journey thou didst wish to undertake to the regions of the Caucasus, and other lands, in order to proclaim the Word of God is a most blessed enterprise. God willing, thou wilt undertake this journey with the utmost enthusiasm and rapture, joy and exhilaration, and become a cause of the exaltation of the Word of God.

The treatise thou hast composed relating the new ideas to the Divine teachings is very good. The “sharing” and “equality”, however, which are mentioned in the Divine Teachings denote measures that are undertaken voluntarily;¹ in other words, should anyone of his own free will have mercy on the poor, and with the utmost gladness bestow upon them his wealth, such a person is favoured in the Court of Grandeur. And indeed, many of the loved ones of God have with the utmost joy and gladness bestowed their wealth upon the poor, practising voluntary sharing in the fullest measure—but of their own free will. As for the new thoughts current in some European countries, these have to do with compulsory, not voluntary, dispositions, which are destructive of the body politic, and a cause of chaos and confusion in all lands. By equality and sharing, as set forth in the Divine Teachings, however, is intended those actions which one putteth into effect of his own free will and with a goodly grace; and this is a sign of magnanimity, and a cause of the good ordering of the human world. It would be good if, in the second edition, thou couldst make this point, that the difference lieth in this, that while no one is entitled to covet, or dispose of, the property of others, yet souls who are detached from all save God, for the love of His Beauty have mercy on the poor and expend their substance on the destitute—nay more, with the utmost joy and pleasure bestow their whole wealth, or a part thereof, upon the poor. In other words, in their love for their fellow men they are self-sacrificial, preferring the interests and comfort of the generality of the people to those of a particular group; and this is voluntary, not compulsory, and a sign of magnanimity, not of coercion and violence.

Convey to the well-favoured handmaid of God, Fátimih Khánum,² a most wondrous Abhá greeting...

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

4 July 1919

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá

1 In the Bahá’í Writings, “sharing” (muvását) and “equality” (musávát) denote, respectively, preferring others to oneself, and treating them equally to oneself. ←

2 The wife of Mírzá ‘Alí-Akbar-i-Nakhjavání. ←