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The 4th Guardian of the Baha'i Faith
At the entrance to his apartment
Marseille, France

Message to all the believers in Baha'u'llah

Statement by E.S. Yazdani

After the first Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, Shoghi Effendi, left this world on Nov. 4, 1957, a group of people, then elevated to the rank of the Hands of the Cause of God, led by Ruhiyyah Khanum, openly opposed and challenged the authority of C. M. Remey, the head of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice, who was appointed by the first guardian of the Faith, to that position, on 9th of January, 1951. As the head of the Universal House of Justice and the office of the Guardianship is the same, C.M. Remey became the 2nd Guardian of the Baha'i faith on 4 Nov. 1951. C.M. Remey declared his position as the 2nd Guardian of the Baha'i Faith and the successor to the 1st Guardian, in his declaration of Ridvan, 117 of B.E.

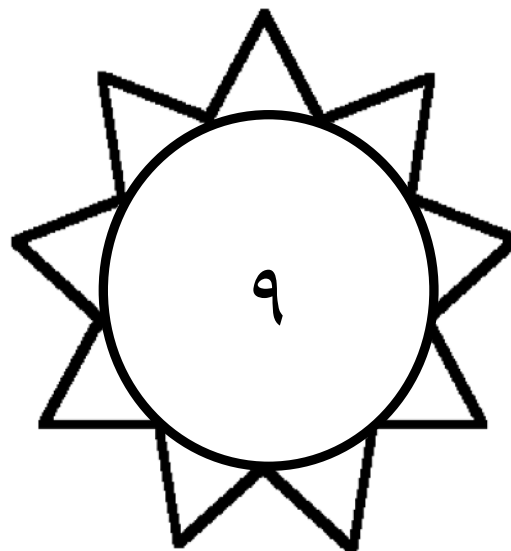
The group of the ex-Hands of the Cause collectively claimed the successor ship to the 1st Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, Shoghi Effendi, and after ***"assuming the reins of authority with no documents"**** to support them, formed an illegitimate Universal House of Justice in 1963 to mislead the believers.

The so called Universal House of Justice does not have the Guardian, in person, as its president, a fundamental requirement under the provision of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. It has not been formed in accordance with the Writings of the Baha'i Faith. It has not been the development of the embryo of Universal House of Justice, established by the first Guardian of the Faith in early 1951. Thus this body, the budded Universal House of Justice, is false Universal House of Justice and it is illegitimate.

The first Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, has rejected, in advance, validity of such an institution in his letter of summer of 1925 where he states:

"Any institution that is not established in accordance with the Divine Order, not in conformity with the principles and the conditions recorded in the Holy Writings, as it is required for this august institution, consequently such an institution is void of credential deprived of spiritual station, and forbidden to have any right to legislate and enact laws and ordinances which are not explicitly recorded in the Holy Writings. It also lacks the essential qualities and the Divine confirmation."
[Reference to the Universal House of Justice]

*Ref. Introduction to "The Ministry of the Custodians 1957—1963" by Ruhiyyah Khanum, page 9



RIDVAN

is the formal publication of the community of the believers in the continuation of Guardianship. It is published under the direction and guidance of his eminence **Jacques Soghomonian** the present 4th Guardian of the Baha'i Faith. Its aim is to teach and promote the teachings of the Baha'i Faith particularly the Principles of the World Order of Baha'u'llah, established by its Founder, Baha'u'llah defined and explained by 'Abdu'l-Baha, and promoted and applied by the 1st Guardian Shoghi Effendi. After Shoghi Effendi the Faith has been guarded by succeeding Guardians; C.M. Remey and D.A. Harvey. The Baha'i Faith is currently protected by the present 4th Guardian of the Faith, Jacques Soghomonian.

RIDVAN is published once every four months for distribution among the believers in Baha'u'llah and others.

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عید رضوان و سال نو مبارک باد

HAPPY REDVAN & Happy NEW YEAR

"On the first day that the Ancient Beauty (Bahá'u'lláh) seated himself upon the Most Great Throne at the garden that was entitled "Ridván" ["paradise"], the tongue of grandeur uttered three blessed verses. One was that in this dispensation, the sword has been sheathed. Another was that anyone who put forward a claim [to be a Manifestation] before the expiration of a thousand years is an impostor. (And by a "year" is meant a full year; subjecting this verse to a figurative interpretation

is forbidden). The third is that the Eternal Truth, may his splendour be glorified, had, at that moment, shed his effulgence upon all things with all the divine names. Yet another verse in fact was revealed a little later, but he said that this passage had the same station as the other three. It is that when any names of individuals are mentioned before the Countenance [of Bahá'u'lláh], all, whether living or dead, attain to the mention of the Pre-existent King. Blessed are they that attain."

TABLET OF NAW-RUZ

BY

BAHA'U'LLAH

Praised be thou, O my God, that Thou hast ordained Now-Ruz as a festival unto those who have observed the fast for love of Thee and abstained from all that is abhorrent unto thee. Grant, O my Lord, that the fire of Thy love and the heat produced by the fast enjoined by Thee may inflame them in Thy cause, and make them to be occupied with Thy praise and with remembrance of Thee.

Since Thou hast adorned them, O my Lord, with the ornament of the fast prescribed by Thee, do Thou adorn them also with the ornament of Thine acceptance, through Thy grace and bountiful favour. For the doings of men are all dependent upon Thy good-pleasure, and are conditioned by Thy behest. Shouldst Thou regard him who hath broken the fast as one who hath observed it, such a man would be reckoned among them who from eternity had been keeping the fast. And shouldst Thou decree that he who hath observed the fast hath broken it, that person would be numbered with such as have caused the robe of Thy Revelation to be stained with dust, and been far removed from the crystal waters of this living Fountain.

Thou art He through Whom the ensign "praise-worthy art Thou in thy works" hath been lifted up and the standard "Obeyed art Thou in Thy behest" hath been unfurled. Make known this Thy station, O my God, unto Thy servants, that they may be made aware that the

excellence of all things is dependent upon Thy bidding and Thy word, and the virtue of every act is conditioned by Thy leave and the good pleasure of Thy will, and may recognise that the reins of men's doings are within the grasp of thine acceptance and Thy commandment. Make this known unto them, that nothing whatsoever may shut them out from Thy beauty, in these days whereon the Christ exclaimeth: "all dominion is Thine, O Thou the Begetter of the Spirit (Jesus)"; and Thy Friend (Muhammad) crieth out: "Glory be Thee, O Thou the Best-Beloved, for that Thou hast uncovered Thy Beauty, and written down for Thy chosen ones what will cause them to attain unto the seat of the revelation of Thy Most Great Name, through which all the people have lamented except such as have detached themselves from all else except Thee, and set themselves towards Him Who is the Revealer of Thyself and the Manifestation of Thine attributes."

He Who is Thy Branch and all Thy company, O my Lord, have broken this day their fast, after having observed it within the precincts of Thy court, and in their eagerness to please Thee. Do Thou ordain for him, and for them, and all such as have entered Thy presence in those days all the good Thou didst destine in Thy Book. Supply them, then, with that which will profit them, in both this life and in the life beyond. Thou, in truth, art the All-knowing, the All-Wise.

Baha'u'llah Says:

Behold, how the divers peoples and kindreds of the earth have been waiting for the coming of the Promised One. No sooner had He, Who is the Sun of Truth, been made manifest, than, lo, all turned away from Him, except them whom God was pleased to guide. We dare not, in this Day, lift the veil that concealeth the exalted station which every true believer can attain, for the joy which such a revelation must provoke might well cause a few to faint away and die.

He Who is the Heart and Center of the Bayán hath written: "The germ that holdeth within itself the potentialities of the Revelation that is to come is endowed with a potency superior to the combined forces of all those who follow Me." And, again, He saith: "Of all the tributes I have paid to Him Who is to come after Me, the greatest is this, My written confession, that no words of Mine can adequately describe Him, nor can any reference to Him in My Book, the Bayán, do justice to His Cause."

Whoso hath searched the depths of the oceans that lie hid within these exalted words, and fathomed their import, can be said to have discovered a glimmer of the unspeakable glory with which this mighty, this sublime, and most holy Revelation hath been endowed. From the excellence of so great a Revelation the honour with which its faithful followers must needs be invested can

be well imagined. By the righteousness of the one true God! The very breath of these souls is in itself richer than all the treasures of the earth. Happy is the man that hath attained thereunto, and woe betide the heedless. Verily I say, this is the Day in which mankind can behold the Face, and hear the Voice, of the Promised One. The Call of God hath been raised, and the light of His countenance hath been lifted up upon men. It behoveth every man to blot out the trace of every idle word from the tablet of his heart, and to gaze, with an open and unbiased mind, on the signs of His Revelation, the proofs of His Mission, and the tokens of His glory.

Great indeed is this Day! The allusions made to it in all the sacred Scriptures as the Day of God attest its greatness. The soul of every Prophet of God, of every Divine Messenger, hath thirsted for this wondrous Day. All the divers kindreds of the earth have, likewise, yearned to attain it. No sooner, however, had the Day Star of His Revelation manifested itself in the heaven of God's Will, than all, except those whom the Almighty was pleased to guide, were found dumbfounded and heedless.

O thou that hast remembered Me! The most grievous veil hath shut out the peoples of the earth from His glory, and hindered them from hearkening to His call. God grant that the light of unity may envelop the whole earth, and that the seal, "the Kingdom is God's", may be stamped upon the brow of all its peoples....

حضرت بهاءالله میفرماید:

جميع احزاب مختلفه ارض منتظر و چون آفتاب حقیقت از افق عالم طالع کلّ معرض الا من شاء الله اگر اليوم مقامات نفوس موقنه ذکر شود بیم آنست از فرط سرور بعضی هلاک شوند نقطه بیان میفرماید " نقطه یک ساله یوم ظهور او اقوی است از کلّ من فی البیان و همچنین میفرماید و قد کتبت جوهرة فی ذکره و هو انه لا یشار بشارتی و لا بما نزل فی البیان اگر نفسی در بحور مستوره در این کلمه علیا تفکر نماید فی الجملة بر مقام این امر اعظم اقدس اعلى آگاه شود مقام ظهور که معلوم شد مقام طائفین معلوم و واضح است لعمر الله نفسی که از نفسی در این امر بر آید معادله نمینماید باو کنوز ارض طوبی لمن فاز ویل للغافلین. فی الحقیقه امروز روز مشاهده و اصغاست هم ندای الهی مرتفع است و هم انوار وجه از افق ظهور مشرق و لائح باید جميع آنچه شنیده شد محو نمود و بعدل و انصاف در آیات و بیّنات و ظهورات ناظر شد امروز عظیم است چه که در جميع کتب بیوم الله معروف جميع انبیا و اصفیا طالب لقای این یوم بدیع بوده‌اند و همچنین احزاب مختلفه ارض و چون آفتاب ظهور از سماء مشیت الهی اشراق نمود کلّ منصعق و مدهوش مشاهده گشتند الا من شاء الله یا ایّها الذّاکر حجاب اکبر بشر را از مشاهده منع نمود و از شنیدن ندا باز داشت انشاء الله آفاق بنور اتفاق منور شود و در جبین جميع من على الأرض نقش خاتم الملك لله منطبع گردد... [منتخباتی از آثار حضرت بهاءاله]

TABLET TO THE FIRST LETTER OF THE LIVING

From The Bab

This is that which We have revealed for the First Believer in Him Whom God shall make manifest, that it may serve as an admonition from Our presence unto all mankind.

In the Name of the Almighty, the Best Beloved

LAUDED and glorified is He Who is the sovereign Lord of the kingdoms of heaven and earth and whatever is between them. Say, verily unto Him shall all return, and He is the One Who guideth at His Own behest whomsoever He pleaseth. Say, all men beseech His blessings and He is supreme over all created things. He is indeed the All-Glorious, the Mighty, the Well-Beloved.

This is an epistle from the letter ‘Thá’ unto him who is the First Believer. Bear thou witness that verily He is I, Myself, the Sovereign, the Omnipotent. He is the One Who ordaineth life and death and unto Him shall all return. Indeed there is none other God but Him and all men bow down in adoration before Him. Verily Thy Lord, God, shall presently recompense every one as He ordaineth, even swifter than uttering the words ‘Be thou, and it is’.

God hath in truth testified in His Book and so also have testified the company of His angels, His Messengers and those endued with divine knowledge, that thou hast believed in God and in His signs and that everyone is guided aright by virtue of thy guidance. This is indeed a boundless grace which God, the Ever-Living, the Self-Subsisting, hath graciously conferred upon

thee aforetime and will confer hereafter. And since thou didst believe in God before the creation, He hath in truth, at His own behest, raised thee up in every Revelation. There is no God but Him, the Sovereign Protector, the All-Glorious.

It behooveth you to proclaim the Cause of God unto all created things as a token of grace from His presence; no God is there but Him, the Most Generous, the All-Compelling.

Say: All matters must be referred to the Book of God; I am indeed the First to believe in God and in His signs; I am the One Who divulgeth and proclaimeth the Truth and I have been invested with every excellent title of God, the Mighty, the Incomparable. Verily I have attained the Day of the First Manifestation and by the bidding of the Lord and as a token of His grace, I shall attain the Day of the Latter Manifestation. There is no God but Him and at the appointed hour everyone shall bow down unto Him in adoration.

I render thanks and yield praise unto God for having been chosen by Him as the Exponent of His Cause in bygone days and in the days to come; there is none other God save Him, the Glorified, the All-Praised, the Ever-Abiding. Whatever is in the heavens and on the earth is His and through Him are we guided aright.

O people of the Bayán! Those who embrace the Truth must turn unto Me, as ordained in the Book and divine guidance will be vouchsafed to whosoever attaineth My presence.

Dis ! O Dieu, mon Dieu ! pare ma tête de la couronne de justice et mon temple de l'ornement de l'équité. Tu es en vérité, le possesseur de tous les dons et de toutes les faveurs.

O toi dont le visage est l'objet de mon adoration, dont la beauté est mon sanctuaire, dont l'habitation est le but de ma vie, dont la louange est mon espoir, dont la providence est ma compagne, dont l'amour est la cause de mon être, dont la mention est ma consolation, l'intimité mon désir, la présence mon espérance la plus chère et ma plus haute aspiration, je te prie de ne pas me refuser ce que tu as ordonné pour tes serviteurs élus. Accorde moi tes bienfaits en ce monde et dans l'autre.

Tu es, en vérité, le roi de tous les hommes. Il n'y a pas d'autre Dieu que toi, l'inlassablement indulgent, le très généreux."

BAHA'U'LLAH

A Prayer by Tahirih Qurratu'l-'Ayn

O Thou to Whose pure and unique quintessence praise is owed: Only from the Word that issued from Thy holy and exalted Being does honor come. O eternal adored One, O goal of the mystics: What world have you created, which is purified above the description of anyone else, and what handiwork have you invented, which is sanctified above the praise of the people of the divine creation! This world could not exist by means of the splendor of anyone save Thee, and this lofty and exalted station belongs to no one but Thee. I bear witness by the visible eye fashioned from the light of utterance that thou art the maker of this world, and that aside from Thee all have been burned up by a drop from the spray of the radiance of that command; and that Thou art the fashioner of this universe and aside from Thee all have been annihilated by a reflection of the flickering of the gleam of that decree.

God is Great! Where is there a seeing eye, a hearing ear, a perceptive heart, a supportive breast? For what station is higher and greater than this, that the Creator of being hath created it anew? And what world is more exalted or holier than the one that the fashioner of beneficence hath made manifest afresh? And what a pure, mind-clearing call has issued from the most noble talisman, the honored temple, the embellished emblem, the most straight scale, in the sanctuary of hearts--upon the horizon of Sinai and the dawning-place of manifestation! All the divine ones shed their haughtiness, and by means of the cry, "This is he!" they enthralled all the spirits who subsisted in the realm of power. And what a fresh, soul-nourishing breeze hath been brought into existence by the potency of the Omnipotent, the Inaccessible, such that all those who dwell on the plane of the invisible essence have departed the realm of outward illumination for that complete serenity.

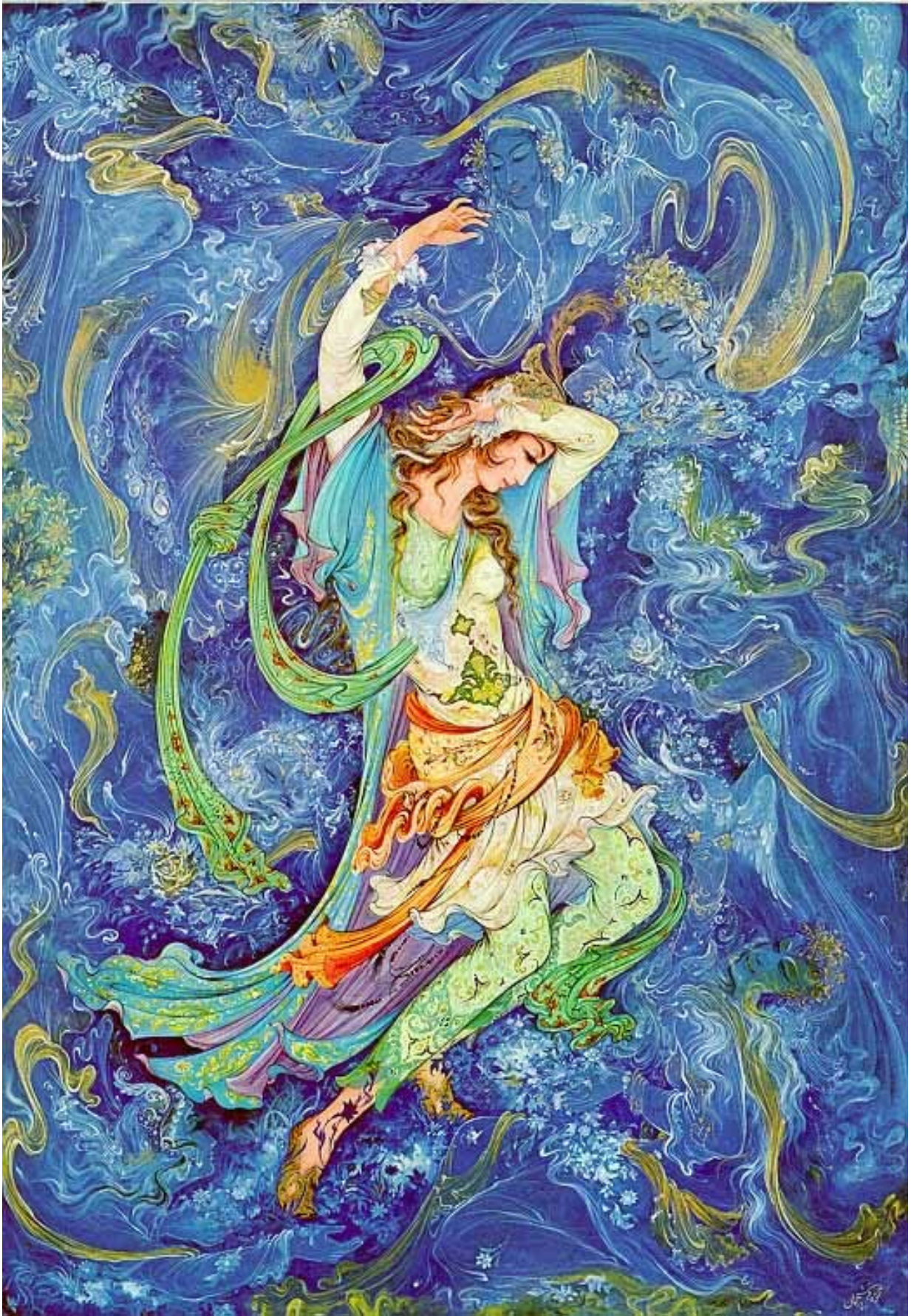
God is Most Powerful! By one glance from among those wondrous glances—by that blessed and

exalted glance that was higher than even the "B" of "Be!" that derived from the light of glory--being would be bestowed on me, even though it was undeserved (indeed, it was pure effulgence and kindness). And I am melted by Thy divine assistance, Lord of munificence, for that radiant and glorious aid is identical to the exalted and illumined light. I am melted, my God, by that mercy whereby Thou didst create me at a time when nothing existed save it. I was formed whirling, after a pattern that no one besides Thee had fashioned, so that Thou mightest set me in motion. Thus might I be brought out of the world of the veils of glory by the attraction exercised by Thy preexistent essence, and thus might I transcend the station of allusions by means of love for Thy shining countenance.

My God, I bear witness to that which Thou has wrought. I accept that which Thou hast given, shall bring forth what Thou didst desire, and shall choose that station which Thou didst bestow upon me. Thus might I gaze upon a beauty that is none other but Thee: No God is there but Him. And I am effaced. I seek a splendor that could not exist by means of any save Thee. No God is there but Thee! And I become sober.

My God, Thine imperative is the answer to my call; Thy "perhaps" is the salve for my misery, and Thine advent is the decree of my religion and the success of my Cause. Verily, Thou art He who created me for the sake of all that, and by virtue of what exists there Thou didst fashion me. Verily, Thou art the best of witnesses, the most merciful of the merciful, and the most generous of the generous. Thou dost answer the call of the distressed. And praise be to Thy Self, lord of the worlds.

Source: *Qurratu'l-'Ayn: Bi-yad-i sadumin sal-i shahadat* (Tehran, 1949), pp. 36-37



A Persian Painting by Farshchian



O SON OF BEING!

Ascribe not to any soul that which thou wouldst not have ascribed to thee, and say not that which thou doest not. This is My command unto thee, do thou observe it

.



O SON OF LOVE!

Thou art but one step away from the glorious heights above and from the celestial tree of love. Take thou one pace and with the next advance into the immortal realm and enter the pavilion of eternity. Give ear then to that which hath been revealed by the pen of glory.



O FRIENDS!

Abandon not the everlasting beauty for a beauty that must die, and set not your affections on this mortal world of dust.

The mystic and wondrous Bride, hidden ere this beneath the veiling of utterance, hath now, by the grace of God and His divine favour, been made manifest even as the resplendent light shed by the beauty of the Beloved. I bear witness, O friends! that the favour is complete, the argument fulfilled, the proof manifest and the evidence established. Let it now be seen what your endeavours in the path of detachment will reveal. In this wise hath the divine favour been fully vouchsafed unto you and unto them that are in heaven and on earth. All praise to God, the Lord of all Worlds.

Response

To

To an article written

By

The False Universal House of Justice

On

“The Covenant” Formulated By

The former Hands of the Faith

By

E. S. Yazdani

April 2010

INTRODUCTION

Subsequent to Shoghi Effendi's death on Nov. 4, 1957, a group of people, then elevated to the rank of the Hands of the Cause of God, openly opposed and challenged the authority of C. M. Remey, the head of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice. Shoghi Effendi's formation of the embryo of Universal House of Justice, also it is known as the 1st International Baha'i Council, and his appointment of C. M. Remey as its president, were announced to the Baha'i World in two consecutive cablegrams of 9 of January and 2 of March 1951. As the head of the Universal House of Justice and the office of the Guardianship, is the same, in accordance with the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, and the fact that embryo possesses all perfection, C.M. Remey was potentially the 2nd Guardian of the Baha'i Faith that is to say Shoghi Effendi's successor. C. M. Remey declared his position as the 2nd Guardian of the Faith in his declaration of April, 1960.

His position as the second Guardian of the Faith was not recognized by the ex-Hands of the Cause. The group of the ex-Hands of the Cause collectively claimed the successor ship to the 1st Guardian of the Baha'i Faith and after ***"assuming the reins of authority with no documents"*** to support them formed an illegitimate universal house of justice in 1963. This illegitimate body became a means in the hands of the ex-hands of the Faith to mislead the believers from the path of the Covenant, initiated by the Author of the Faith and confirmed by His successor, 'Abdu'l-Baha in His Will and testament and repeatedly announced its essentials by the 1st guardian of the Faith.

The so called Universal House of Justice does not have the Guardian, in person, as its president, a fundamental requirement under the provision of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. It has not been formed in accordance with the Writings of the Baha'i Faith. It has not been the development of the embryo of

Universal House of Justice. Thus this body, the budded Universal House of Justice, is false Universal House of Justice, FUHJ, and it is illegitimate.

Shoghi Effendi, with his statement of summer of 1925 left no ambiguity that any institution in which it has not been formed in accordance with the requirement of the Writings such an institution is void of legitimacy. He states: ***"Any institution that is not established in accordance with the Divine Order, not in conformity with the principles and the conditions recorded in the Holy Writings, as it is required for this august institution, consequently such an institution is void of credential deprived of spiritual station, and forbidden to have any right to legislate and enact laws and ordinances which are not explicitly recorded in the Holy Writings. It also lacks the essential qualities and the Divine confirmation."*** [Reference to the Universal House of Justice]

Initially the group of the ex-Hands of the Cause and currently the false universal house of justice continues to deny C. M. Remey as the 2nd Guardian of the Faith and they claim that the line of Guardianship was ended with the death of the 1st Guardian, Shoghi Effendi.

To justify their claim and to mislead the believers further from the Path, the Covenant of Baha'u'llah has been twisted to a new version made by the ex-Hands of the Faith and subsequently confirmed by the false universal house of justice after its formation in 1963.

There is the Greater Covenant, where God, through His manifestation, makes with the people of the world to accept, or otherwise, the Promised One of Age and the lesser Covenant where Manifestation of God makes it with His believers. The emphasis is on the latter.

After the ascension of Baha'u'llah in 1892, the Book of Covenant was opened and in that document Baha'u'llah appointed 'Abdu'l-Baha to succeed Him. 'Abdu'l-Baha, as the Centre of the Covenant of

Baha'u'llah, ministered the affairs of the Faith from 1892 to late 1921. After 'Abdu'l-Baha's assertion, His Will and Testament was opened and in that document 'Abdu'l-Baha appointed Shoghi Effendi to succeed Him as the 1st Guardian of the Faith followed by succeeding Guardians. 'Abdu'l-Baha established the institution of Guardianship in His Will and Shoghi Effendi represented the 1st guardian of the Institution of Guardianship. As part of the World Order of Baha'u'llah, the Institution of Guardianship was fully established and Guardian of the Faith is permanent head of the Universal House of Justice. In accordance to the Will and Testament, the Universal House of Justice has to have the Guardian as its president for the life the Universal House of Justice in the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah which is not going to be less than one thousand years.

In accordance with the Writing, one to be firm in the Covenant has to

- Accept the Bab and Baha'u'llah as the Promised Ones of all the ages,
- 'Abdu'l-Baha as the successor to Baha'u'llah and the Centre of the Covenant,
- Acceptance without any reservation to every Clause of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, includes continuation of Guardianship,
- Acceptance to all the Writings revealed by their Pens of the three Central Figures of the Faith, The Bab, Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha

On the other hand the ex-Hands created their own version of covenant with the believers. They propagated, directed and forced the believer to swallow the idea that the so called universal house of justice is the legitimate Universal House of Justice and all must turn to, the line of guardianship is ended with the death of Shoghi Effendi, he did not leave a will to appoint his successor, assumed the function of the guardian, such as receiving Huquq'u'llah, ex-communicating others not supporting their version of covenant etc.

Continuing their attacks on the institutions of the World Order of Baha'u'llah

particularly the Institution of Guardianship, the false universal house of justice has re-published two articles on the subject under the titles of "Firmness in the Covenant" and "Mason Remey and Those Who Followed Him". These articles are published in the present administration media in various languages. The writer has seen them in the English, Persian and French. It is highly likely that these articles are published in other languages as well.

The argument presented in these articles is very weak and baseless. The false universal house of justice does not provide references to its quotation, does not make references to the firm and undisputed Holly Writings in support of the continuation of Guardianship, provides half truth, misrepresents and interprets the Writings to suits their argument and makes references to their own resolution as if an outlaw presents his own made laws to defend his wrong doings. They act in accordance with that Old Persian proverb where it says "Prove that you are my brother then make a claim on my father's inheritance". The false universal house of justice high lights the wrong doings of some of the individuals as evidence to their baseless argument.

The writer attempts to respond to these articles in order of the argument developed by the false universal house of justice. The reader should make his or her own judgement to come to the conclusion or otherwise that the line of Guardianship in the Baha'i Faith is not ended and the false universal house of justice has violated the Covenant of Baha'u'llah and has dragged the believers to waywardness.

RESPONSE

The false universal house of justice states [FUHJ]: "We have received a letter from a believer in Iran with questions about the Guardianship and the Universal House of Justice. We appreciate that firmness in the covenant is among the distinctive characteristics of the believers in that land, who are informed of the principles and essential facts pertaining to the succession of authority in the Cause. Nevertheless, none among them should hesitate to seek clarification of matters about which they have questions, for the

enemies of the Faith are tireless in their attempts to sow seeds of confusion and doubt. Moreover, it is beneficial, in view of the beloved Master's exhortations to us all to be ever-vigilant concerning matters of protection, for the friends to review the relevant essentials from time to time. We have therefore decided to provide you with the following comments. In this connection, you are also encouraged to reacquaint yourselves with the document "Mason Remey and Those Who Followed Him", a statement prepared at our instruction by an ad hoc committee ... [That document follows.]"

E. S. Yazdani [ESY]: This is not true at all. The false universal house of justice has never "informed of the principles and essential facts pertaining to the succession of authority in the Cause" to the believers. The false house has not highlighted or brought to the attention of the believers the full contents of the Will and Testament, the contents of the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah or other relevant writings on the continuation of Guardianship. The writer testifies that he never heard or read any statement from the false universal house of justice, prior to his self investigation of the Institution of the Guardianship, on the subject of Guardianship and the writings on this subject. In fact he was not questioned by any member of the Shiraz Local Assembly of the matter of the continuation or discontinuity of Guardianship when he re-confirmed his faith in the Baha'i Faith over 45 years ago. The false universal house of justice purposely mislead the believers by highlighting their own version of the "essential facts" for the firm and undisputable verses of the Will and Testament and dispensation of Baha'u'llah on continuation of Guardianship. The reader will note this fact by close study of the documents left by 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi for the believers to investigate. The reader may compare the article written by the false house with the material written by the 1st guardian and the Centre of the Covenant. The reader can easily realise that the false house does not write the truth.

Further the false house of justice continues to write "for the enemies of the Faith are tireless in their attempts to sow seeds of confusion and doubt." The false universal house of justice attempts, as the ex-hands of the faith did, to portray the believers in the continuation of Guardianship as the enemies

of the Faith and show themselves as the faithful ones to the Covenant of Baha'u'llah. A sincere researcher, after learning the deeds of the ex-hands of the Faith and the so called universal house of justice, will find, with no difficulties that it was initially the group of ex-hands of the Faith and now the false universal house of justice planting the seeds of doubt in the minds of the believers and by their violation of the Covenant of Baha'u'llah became the inside enemies of the Faith. In fact by their action have fulfilled 'Abdu'l-Baha's prophecy of the Will and Testament; "How often hath grievous error been disguised in the garb of truth, that it might sow the seeds of doubt in the hearts of men!" [The Will and Testament, page 12, 1944 edition] Their deeds include but not limited to denying the continuation of guardianship, taking over the duties of guardian of the Faith, changing holy writings to suits their objectives, interpretation of Holy Writings, omission and misrepresentation of the sacred Words etc. The reader's attention is drawn to the contents of the Will and Testament and Dispensation of Baha'u'llah and other materials related to the World Order of Baha'u'llah and in particular to the continuation of the Guardianship and see how this administration has disguised themselves.

To the false universal house of justice and their predecessor, the ex-hands of the Faith, "protection" and "review relevant essentials" are referred to their own version of the covenant made by them to deceive the believers.

The believers in the continuation of Guardianship has responded to the article; "Mason Remey and Those Who Followed Him" when it was published in 1998.

When a dictator takes over authority that, by no means belongs to him, he as part of his characteristic, gathers around himself a group of crawlers to do exactly what the dictator wants. This is the case of then the collective dictatorship of the group of ex-hands and now the dictatorship of this false universal house of justice. Under their instruction this ad hoc committee has done exactly what they were asked to do. This is another document made by the false house of justice of their violation of the Covenant.

FUJH writes: "Questions concerning the guardianship and the Universal House of Justice

can be resolved through careful study of the writings of Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi and the elucidations of the house of justice, which, 'Abdu'l-Baha states, will "deliberate upon all problems which have caused difference, questions that are obscure and matters that are not expressly recorded in the Book. Whatsoever they decide," He assures the friends, "has the same effect as the Text itself."

ESY: The Writings, particularly "The Will and Testament" and "Dispensation of Baha'u'llah" have not left any ambiguity, question or problem to be solved in matters of Universal House of Justice and continuation of Guardianship. In these documents the appointment of the guardian has been made clear and the duties of the Universal House of Justice have been clearly outlined. The false universal house of justice attempts to confuse the reader by quotation of a verse of the Will and Testament on matters that are not explicitly written in the Holy Writings. And further this false house of justice assumes interpretation of the Writings which is the duty of the guardian of the Faith. Above all the true Universal House of Justice has the guardian of the Faith as its president. 'Abdu'l-Baha stated in His Will: "By this body all difficult problems are to be solved and the guardian of the Cause of God is its sacred head and the distinguished member for life of that body. Should he not attend in person its deliberations, he must appoint one to represent him".

It said "اول برادريت ثابت كن بعد ادعای ميراثش كن". The false universal house of justice, as Mirza Muhammad Ali did, has 'put aside the firm and conclusive verses and sowed the seeds of doubt"

FUJH writes: "Prior to the passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha in 1921, the provisions He had put in place in His Will and Testament to safeguard the Faith and ensure its steady advancement into the future were generally unknown. The believers anticipated a day when the Universal House of Justice would be established since it had been specifically mentioned in the Sacred Texts. There was, however, no definite understanding that there would be a Guardian. Indeed, Shoghi Effendi later indicated that he had no foreknowledge of the position to which he would be called. At most, he had reportedly thought the Will and Testament might charge him, as the eldest grandson of 'Abdu'l-Baha, with responsibility for arranging for the election of the House of Justice. Only after

the reading of the Will did the institution of the Guardianship become widely known, and the Baha'i community worldwide acknowledged Shoghi Effendi as the Head of the Faith to whom all must turn."

ESY: So what? It became known after His ascension. Besides to this, the first guardian described the institutions of the World Order of Baha'u'llah by writing numerous letters and articles on the subject. He left no doubt that the institutions as established in the Will, are the requirements of the World Order of Baha'u'llah to be continued in the Dispensation of the Baha'i Faith. He made strong emphasis on the importance of the institution of Guardianship and its continuity. He wrote "Without such an institution [Guardianship] the integrity of the Faith would be imperilled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would be suffered, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representative would be totally withdrawn."

"بدون این موسسه [ولایت امرالله] وحدت امرالله در
خطر افتد و بنیا نش متزلزل گردد و از منزلتش بکاهد و از
واسطه فیضی که بر عواقب امور در طی دهور احاطه
دارد با لمره بی نصیب ماند و هدایتی که جهت تعیین حدود
و وظائف تقنینیه منتخبین ضروری است از آن سلب گردد
[از توقیع دور بهایی نوشته شوقی افندی]

The reader's attention is drawn to the trick the false universal house of justice is using to confuse the reader that Shoghi Effendi did not form the forerunner of the Universal House of Justice in his own life time and he left this important to others to form after his ascension.

FUJH: "An attentive reading of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Will makes it clear that He did not indicate a predestined outcome but did provide for a number of circumstances which, depending on future conditions, might eventually confront the Faith. [Emphasis added] The second section of the Will, for instance, which refers only to the Universal House of Justice, with no mention of the Guardianship, was written at a time when His own life was in imminent danger and Shoghi Effendi was but a small boy. During that same period, 'Abdu'l-Baha had made arrangements for the election of the Universal House of Justice to take place immediately, should the threat on His life

materialize. Through the grace of God, the crisis passed, and it was ultimately left to Shoghi Effendi many years later, as Guardian and Head of the Faith, to determine the timing of the formation of the House of Justice. Early on he considered the possibility of holding the election soon after the passing of 'Abdu'l-Baha, in which case the House of Justice and the Guardian would have functioned simultaneously. He determined, of course, that the foundations of the Administrative Order needed first to be firmly laid at the local and national levels, and it was eventually transpired that the house of Justice was established several years after his own passing. That the transition from the ministry of the Guardian to the election of the Universal House of Justice occurred with such relative ease can, itself, be attributed to the way certain provisions in the Will were formulated."

ESY: Is it possible that 'Abdu'l-Baha, the centre of the Covenant creates conditions in His Will to cause for arising differences among the believers? The false house accuses, openly and without any shxxx, that 'Abdu'l-Baha provided conditions for future differences among the believers. Is it believable? Or the false house has a hidden agenda! The false house purposely does not bring to the attention of the believers the formation of the embryo of Universal House of Justice by the first guardian in early Jan. 1951 and appointment of C.M. Remey as its president on 2 of March of the same year. Shoghi Effendi on 9th of Jan. 1951 sends the following cablegram to the Baha'i World: "Proclaim National Assemblies of East and West weighty epoch making decision of formation of first International Baha'i Council, forerunner of supreme administrative institution destined to emerge in fullness of time within precincts beneath shadow of World Spiritual Centre of Faith already established in twin cities of 'Akk'a and Haifa. Fulfilment of prophecies uttered by Founder of Faith and Centre of His Covenant culminating in establishment of Jewish State, signaling birth after lapse of two thousand years of an independent nation in the Holy Land, the swift unfoldment of historic undertaking associated with construction of superstructure of the Bab's Sepulchre on Mount Carmel, the present adequate maturity of nine vigorously functioning national administrative

institutions throughout the Baha'i world, combine to induct me to arrive at this historic decision making most significant milestone in evolution of administrative order of the Faith of Baha'u'llah in course of last thirty years. Nascent Institution now created is invested with threefold function: first, to forge link with authorities of newly emerged State; second, to assist me to discharge responsibilities involved erection of mighty superstructure of the Bab's Holy Shrine; third, to conduct negotiations related to matters of personal status with civil authorities. To these will be added further functions in course of evolution of this first embryonic International Institution, making its development into officially recognised Baha'i Court, its transformation into duly elected body, its efflorescence into Universal House of Justice, and its final fruition through erection of manifold auxiliary institutions constituting the World Administrative Centre destined to arise and function and remain permanently established in close neighbourhood of Twin Holy Shrines. Hail with thankful, joyous heart at long last the constitution of International Council which history will acclaim as the greatest event shedding lustre upon second epoch of Formative Age of Baha'i Dispensation potentially unsurpassed by any enterprise undertaken since inception of Administrative Order of Faith on morrow of 'Abdu'l-Bah'a's Ascension, ranking second only to glorious immortal events associated with ministries of the Three Central Figures of Faith in course of First Age of most glorious Dispensation of the five thousand century Baha'i cycle. Advice publicise announcement through Public Relations Committee. [Underlines added]

On 2 March 1951, the Guardian sent another cablegram to the Baha'i world. In this cablegram Shoghi Effendi appointed Charles Mason Remey as the President of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice. The cablegram reads:

"Greatly welcome assistance of the newly formed International Council, particularly its president, Mason Remey, and its Vice President, Amelia Collins, through contact with authorities designed to spread the fame, consolidate the foundation and widen the

scope of influence emanating from the twin spiritual, administrative World Centres permanently fixed in the Holy Land constituting the midmost heart of the entire planet.” [Underlines is added]

FUHH: “ ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s Will and Testament clearly allows for the possibility of a successor to Shoghi Effendi, and in this light, we find statements written by him or on his behalf over the course of his thirty-six-year ministry that envision future Guardians. However, there are no assurances in the Writings that the line of Guardians would continue throughout the Dispensation; rather, the possibility is envisaged that such a line would come to an end. In this respect, Baha’u’llah states in the Kit’ab-i-Aqdas: ‘Endowments dedicated to charity revert to God, the Revealer of Signs. None hath the right to dispose of them without leave from Whim Who is the Dawning-place of Revelation. After Him, this authority shall pass to the Aghsan, and after them to the House of Justice – should it be established in the world by then – that they may use these endowments for the benefit of the Places which have been exalted in this Cause, and for whatsoever hath been enjoined upon them by Him Who is the God of might and power. Otherwise, the endowments shall revert to the people of Baha who speak not except by His leave and judge not save in accordance with what God hath decreed in this Tablet – lo, they are the champions of victory betwixt heaven and earth – that they may use them in the manner that hath been laid down in the Book by God, the Mighty, the Bountiful.’

ESY: The original text of the quotation from the Kit’ab-i-Aqdas is:

قد رجعت الاوقاف المختصة للخيرات الى
الله مظهر الايات ليس لاحد ان يتصرف فيها
الا بعد اذن مطلع الوحي و من بعده يرجع الحكم
الى الاغصان و من بعدهم الى بيت العدل ان تحقق
امره في البلاد ليصرفوها في البقاع المرتفعة في
هذا الامر و فيما امروا به من لدن مقتدر قدير * و
الا ترجع الى اهل البهاء الذين لا يتكلمون الا بعد
اذنه و لا يحكمون الا بما حكم الله في هذا اللوح
اولئك اولياء النصير بين السموات و الارضين *
ليصرفوها فيما حدّد في الكتاب من لدن عزيز كريم

Anyone with basic knowledge of Arabic language will learn that the translation of the text into the English by the false universal house of justice is not correct. The false

universal house of justice wrongly and purposely translated the text into the English to suits their argument. Baha’u’llah has given authority for use of endowments first to Himself, then to Aghsan, then to the House of Justice if it is formed in the cities, [البلدان] plural for [بلد] not in the world that conveys a different meaning. The false house has translated the text in such a way to convey wrong message/impression in the minds of the believers that House of Justice is meant to be Universal House of Justice. Clearly Baha’u’llah has authorized the local houses to use the endowments when He has used cities in the Kit’ab-i-Aqdas. The reader’s attention is also drawn to the fact that the word “اولياء” is plural of the word “ولي” which means guardians. The false house tries again to mislead the reader from the fact that the continuation of guardianship is in fact predicted in the Kit’ab-i-Aqdas.

Assume, for the sake of argument, that the false universal house of justice is right. It implies that ‘Abdu’l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi were not aware of this verse of the Kit’ab-i-Aqdas and the Will, dispensation of Baha’u’llah and other materials related to the administration were written in contrary to the Kit’ab-i-Aqdas. This is not possible and ‘Abdu’l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi had not written in contrast to the Writings of Baha’u’llah. Shoghi Effendi states: “It does not constitute in any manner a contradiction to the Will and Writing of Baha’u’llah, nor does it nullify any of his revealed instructions.” Has not the false house read this quotation?

FUHH: “The passing of Shoghi Effendi precipitated the situation described, in which the authority vested in the Aghsan – first in ‘Abdu’l-Baha and then in Shoghi Effendi – ended before the House of Justice was established.

In His Will and Testament, ‘Abdu’l-Baha specifies in the clearest terms the conditions according to which Shoghi Effendi was to have named his successor as Guardian: ‘O ye beloved of the Lord! It is incumbent upon the guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor that differences may not arise after his passing. He that is appointed must manifest in himself detachment from all worldly things, must be the essence of purity, must show in himself the fear of God, knowledge, wisdom and learning. Thus, should the first-born of the guardian of the Cause of God

not manifest in himself the truth of the words: - "The child is the secret essence of its sire," that is, should he not inherit of the spiritual within him (the guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him."

ESY: Shoghi Effendi had to appoint his successor in his own life time. The manner in which he appointed his successor was not to the expectation of the believers. He formed the embryo of the Universal House of Justice and he appointed C. M. Remey as its president.

Shoghi Effendi could appoint any one among the believers to succeed him. In a letter to Mr. H. Chance, a member of the so called Universal House of Justice the writer wrote: "Shoghi Effendi had to appoint in his own lifetime his successor. The appointed guardian had to be his son or 'another branch.' Shoghi Effendi had no physical son and in fact, he had no children. Let us study several verses of Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l-Baha's writings to understand the true meaning of "another branch" and see if "branch" is limited to physical relatives of Baha'u'llah, or if 'another branch' refers to all believers in the Baha'i faith.

Baha'u'llah defines the meaning of 'branch' in a Tablet addressed to an individual. He states: '*Since the believers and the loved ones [of God] are like unto branches and leaves of this Holy Tree [Baha'u'llah] therefore whatever befalls upon the original Stock will also befall upon branches, twigs, and leaves*' (Baha'u'llah, Al'vah-i-moba'rakeh, 343)

In this verse Baha'u'llah states that all believers in him are branches and "branch" is not limited to blood relatives. 'Abdu'l-Baha in several tables leaves no doubt that branch refers to all believers that are sincere believers in Baha'u'llah. In particular 'Abdu'l-Baha explains that sonship is divided into two: physical and spiritual. The first is made of elements and the latter is of spirit. His words follow:

'The line of descendants is divided into two kinds. One is the physical descendants, and the other spiritual. One is born of water and earth, and the other is born of soul and

heart.' ('Abdu'l-Baha, *Ma'idiy-i-Asmani*, Vol. 5, 161)

Regarding the same subject, the following verses may be meditated upon:

'The branches (aghsa'an) are not limited to certain individuals, they have succession''

(Abdu'l-Baha, *Ma'idiy-i-Asmani*, Vol. 2, 76)

'Verily, God told Prophet Noah explicitly, "Indeed, he [your son] is not of your family; for his conduct is unrighteous'.

'[Prophet Abraham asked God] of my descendants? [God] said, My covenant does not include the wrongdoers"

'Truly, the material elements and the earthly natures are not taken into consideration nor they are related to it [spiritual descendants].

'Indeed, it is acknowledged in a goodly character not within the lineage....'He [God] brings the living out of the dead and brings the dead out of the living "and whosoever sets a limitation for God's grace and His glorious bounties, such a man is in error and transgression.'

'In truth, God is able to do the extraordinary things and reveal signs and wonders...' He selects for His mercy whom He wills.

(Maka'tib of 'Abdu'l-Baha, Vol. 1, 6 – 11).

- 'fear not if this branch be severed from this material world and cast its leaves; nay, the leaves thereof shall flourish, for this branch will grow after it is cut off from this world below, it shall reach the loftiest pinnacles of glory, and it shall bear such fruits as will perfume the world with their fragrance.'
- Consider "The Divine Gardener cuts off the dry or weak branch from the good tree and grafts to it a branch from another tree." He both separates and unites.'
- Consider this text of the New Testament: "The brothers of his holiness Christ, came to him and said: These are your brothers. He answered that his brothers were those who believed in God, and refused to associate with his own brothers.'
- Likewise Qurratu'l-'Ayn... when she believed in God and was attracted to the Divine Breaths, she forsook her two eldest sons, although they were her two oldest children, because they

did not become believers, and thereafter did not meet them. She said: 'All the friends of God are my children, but these two are not. I will have nothing to do with them.

Shoghi Effendi, in the translation of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, translates the term 'another branch' in the ordinary English usage of the word 'branch' and not in its capital form 'Branch.' It is true that neither the Arabic nor Persian language contain any capital letters, but there are capitals in the English language. Shoghi Effendi, whom we all accept as the interpreter of the Holy writings, left no ambiguity that the term "another branch" does apply to any category of people. To our understanding, the translations of the Holy writings by the Guardian are indeed a form of interpretation. "another branch" is not a proper noun; it is a common noun, is it not?

FUHJ: "The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the guardian of the Cause of God. The election of these nine must be carried either unanimously or by majority from the company of the Hands of the Cause of God and these, whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished (i.e., secret ballot)."

ESY: The statement in the Will does not mean that the Hands could overrule the guardian. The first guardian stated that "The statement in the will of 'Abdu'l-Baha does not imply that the Hands of the cause of God have been given authority to overrule the Guardian. 'Abdu'l-Bah could not have provided for a conflict of authority in the Faith. This is obvious, in view of His own words, which you will find on page 13 of the will's Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha. 'The mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the cause of God ... It is incumbent upon the members of the House of Justice, upon all the Aghsan, the Afnan, the Hands of the cause of God, to show their

obedience, submissiveness and the subordination unto the Guardian of the cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him had opposed the true one.'[Baha'i News Feb. 1955] The reader's attention is drawn to the fact that the ex-hand did not elect nine people among themselves to serve the guardian nor they considered the importance of the formation of the first international council, the embryo of the Universal House of Justice, and the importance of his appointment of C. M. Remey as its president. The ex-hands commenced opposing the Will and the Covenant prior to passing of the 1st Guardian.

FUHJ: "The personal views of any individual regarding the above statement, no matter how learned, cannot compare with the Guardians infallible understanding of the passage. Shoghi Effendi, who faithfully adhered to the wishes of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-baha throughout his ministry, would never have been careless in a matter so essential to the integrity of the Faith as the question of appointment of his successor. It is unthinkable that he would appoint someone to succeed him who did not possess the qualifications laid down by 'Abdu'l-Baha in His Will. It is equally untenable to suggest that he would do so in a manner which deviated from the explicit requirements in that same document, which included the affirmation of his choice by nine designated Hands of the Cause of God, so that "differences" would "not arise after his passing." How perverse the suggestion of the violators of the Covenant that Shoghi Effendi would ignore the Masters instructions and make a veiled and indirect appointment of his successor! Rather should the fact that Shoghi Effendi did not name a successor be seen as a sign of his meticulous adherence to every word of 'Abdu'l-Baha's Will and an indication of his conclusion that there was no qualified individual whom he could appoint."

ESY: As stated earlier Shoghi Effendi had to appoint his successor. His choice to appoint his successor was not limited to a certain individual. All the true believers in Baha'u'llah were/are the branches branched from the Ancient Tree. Baha'u'llah Himself has defined the "branch". See above. It was the ex-hands and now this false universal house of justice that confuses and plant seeds of doubts in the mind of the innocent believers. If the inside enemies of the past

religion were able to overcome the true one; in this dispensation the writings on the subject are written by Baha'u'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha and fully explained by the 1st guardian of the Faith. This is not the past dispensation.

If Shoghi Effendi could not appoint a person to succeed him on the basis that nobody was qualified to succeed him; how was it possible that the ex-hands collectively claimed his successor ship? How?

The ex-hands did not appoint nine persons among themselves to serve the 1st guardian at the first place. Nor they considered the importance of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice and its president C.M. Remey. The ex-hands neither understood or they choose not to understand the 1st guardian's action on the formation of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice they simply failed to do their duties.

As it was stated earlier the ex-hands did not have authority to overrule the guardian. Shoghi Effendi has confirmed this two years prior to his death. The false house cannot use the statement of the Will as a means to create doubt and confusion in the minds of the believers.

FUJHJ: Therefore, it should be clear to every steadfast follower of Baha'u'llah that the end of the line of Guardians was not the result of any decision or action taken by the hands of the Cause of God following the sudden passing of Shoghi Effendi. The line was brought to a close when, compelled by existing circumstances and the strict provisions of the Will, Shoghi Effendi did not name a successor. To entertain the possibility that it may one day be re-established is futile.

ESY: On contrary it was the decision of the ex-hands and their creation of the false universal house of justice to assume the end to the line of Guardianship. A sincere researcher finds no reference in the Writings and the interpretation of the 1st guardian to suggest the end to the Guardianship. It was purely the decision of the ex-hands and particularly, Mrs. Rabbani, the ring leader, the Arch violator of the Covenant of Baha'u'llah to assume the end to the Guardianship. The false house of justice and the ex-hands blame the 1st guardian that he did not do his duty!! What a violation of the Covenant by the ex-hand and the false universal house of justice.

FUJHJ: "Abdu'l-Baha wrote that "ere the expiration of a thousand years, no one has the right to utter a single word, even to claim the station of Guardianship." And in the same passage He exhorted the friends, "should there be differences of opinion, the Supreme House of Justice would immediately resolve the problems." The Universal House of Justice, soon after its formation, stated that it "finds that there is no way to appoint or to legislate to make it possible to appoint a second Guardian to succeed Shoghi Effendi."

ESY: The false house does not provide references to its quotations. It is hard to verify its source. However Baha'u'llah indeed stated that no one would claim prophet hood before expiration of 1000 years. The false universal house of justice attempts to confuse the believers with matter that do not relate to the subject. 'Abdu'l-Baha clearly confirmed continuation of Guardianship in His Will. He has outlined the duties of the guardians in the dispensation of Baha'u'llah. It is completely different subject of the continuation of the Guardianship to a claim of prophet hood prior to expiration of thousand years. If there is a legitimate Universal House of Justice with Guardian its president, it would be right for the individual to turn to the Universal House of Justice for a resolution on matters that are not explicitly written in the Writings, not on matters that clearly stated in the Writing. Guardianship has been predicted by Baha'u'llah in His Writings, clearly stated in the Will and Testament and Shoghi Effendi has confirmed its continuation. It is not the right of a legitimate Universal House of Justice to pass a rule opposite to the Writings.

FUJHJ: "While the line of Guardians has ended, the Covenant is preserved. The vast body of interpretations of Shoghi Effendi informs the decisions of the Universal House of Justice as the Faith continues its onward march. The unity of the Faith is safeguarded, and the realization of Baha'u'llah's great purpose for humanity assured. "The Hand of Omnipotence hath established His revelation upon an unassailable, an enduring foundation," Baha'u'llah has stated. "Storms of human strife are powerless to undermine its basis, nor will men's fanciful theories succeed in damaging its structure."

ESY: The false universal house of justice writes opposite to the writings of the 1st guardian while claiming respect for his interpretations. The 1st guardian states: “It must be also clearly understood by every believer that the institution of the Guardianship does not under any circumstances abrogate, or even in the slightest degree detract from the power granted to the Universal House of Justice by Baha’u’llah in the Kitab-i-Aghdas, and repeatedly and solemnly confirmed by ‘Abdu’l-Baha in his Will. It does not constitute in any manner a contradiction to the Will and Writing of Baha’u’llah, nor does it nullify any of his revealed instructions. It enhances the prestige of that exalted assembly, stabilizes its supreme position, safeguards its unity, and assures the continuity of its labours, without presuming in the slightest to infringe upon the inviolability of its clearly-defined sphere of jurisdiction...”[Shoghi Effendi, *The World Order of Baha’u’llah Selected Letters*, Page 8]

FUHIJ: “With reference to the specific questions raised in the letter we have received, one concerns the meaning of the designation “Aghsan”, as found in the Writings. While in some cases, as affirmed by the guardian, the term applies specifically to Baha’u’llah’s sons, at other times it is used more broadly to include his male descendants. For example, in His Will and Testament ‘Abdu’l-Baha refers to Shoghi Effendi as “the chosen branch” (*Ghusn-i-Mumtaz*). The reference to Shoghi Effendi as *Ghusn* here – the singular form of *Aghsan* – follows the usage of Baha’u’llah in relation to the titles He gave his sons, that is, the Most Great Branch, the Greater Branch and the Purest Branch. A letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi explains that the word *Aghsan* “refers to Baha’u’llah descendants”; another describes Hussein Rabbani, the Guardian’s brother, as the grandchild of the Master, an *Afnan* and *Aghsan* mentioned in the Will and Testament of the Master.” It is evident, then, that the designation *Aghsan*, or *Ghusn*, includes Shoghi Effendi and the other male descendants of Baha’u’llah.

“If, at any time, male descendants of Baha’u’llah appear who are faithful to the Covenant, it would nevertheless not be possible for any of them to occupy the office of Guardian, for, as already explained, in the absence of appointment by Shoghi Effendi, they cannot claim the station of Guardianship and there is no way for one to be named to it by an act of the House of Justice.”

ESY: This matter of “Aghsan” and “another branch” has been fully explained earlier.

FUHIJ: “Another query concerns the establishment of the Universal House of Justice. Specifically, the question has been asked whether the functioning of an “officially recognised” International Baha’i Court in the Holy Land, mentioned by Shoghi Effendi was an essential preliminary step in the evolution of the Universal House of Justice.”

“As you are no doubt aware, Shoghi Effendi explained that “ ‘Abdu’l-Baha, Himself, in one of His earliest Tablets, contemplated the possibility of the formation of the Universal House of Justice in His own lifetime.” The Master described the requirements necessary for its formation, which did not include the establishment of a religious court:

“The Supreme House of Justice should be elected according to the system followed in the election of the parliaments of Europe. And when the countries would be guided the Houses of Justice of the various countries would elect the Supreme House of Justice.

“At whatever time all the beloved of God in each country appoint their delegates, and these in turn elect their representatives, and these representatives elect a body, that body shall be regarded as the Supreme House of Justice.

The establishment of that House is not dependent upon the conversion of all the nations of the world. For example, if conditions were favourable and no disturbances would be caused, the friends in Persia would elect their representatives, and likewise the friends in America, in India and other areas would also elect their representatives, and these would elect a House of Justice. That House of Justice would be the Supreme House of Justice. That is all.”

ESY: The false house attempts to confuse the believers the method of election of the members of the Universal House of Justice with that of the continuation of Guardianship and the necessary requirement of the evolution of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice into a) Baha’i Court, b) into duly elected body by the method described by ‘Abdu’l-Baha and under the direction of the guardian, and finally its transformation into the Universal House of Justice. The text of the cablegram of January 9, 1951 is very clear of the stated facts; “To these will be added further functions in course of evolution of this first embryonic International Institution,

making its development into officially recognised Baha'i Court, its transformation into duly elected body, its efflorescence into Universal House of Justice,". Further the recognition of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice into Baha'i Court, was one the objectives of the "Ten Year Crusade" that the ex-hands abandoned the Plan and made their own version of the it and continued to make excuses that the conditions of the societies did not allow them to achieve the Ten Year Crusade Plan objectives. The formation of the Baha'i Court was necessary and preliminary requirements for the formation of the Universal House of Justice. Not only was this a prelude requirement to the formation of the Universal House of Justice; its transformation into duly elected body was the second step into the formation of Universal House. The importance of the achievements of the objectives of the Plan cannot be more emphasised than the 1st Guardian's letter of June 30, 1952 where the guardian ends his letter with the following statement; "No matter how long the period that separates them from ultimate victory; however arduous the task; however formidable the exertions demanded of them; however dark the days which mankind, perplexed and sorely-tried, must, in its hour of travail, traverse; however severe the tests with which they who are to redeem its fortunes will be confronted; however afflictive the darts which their present enemies, as well as those whom Providence, will, through His mysterious dispensations raise up from within or from without, may rain upon them, however grievous the ordeal of temporary separation from the heart and nerve-center of their Faith which future unforeseeable disturbances may impose upon them, I adjure them, by the precious blood that flowed in such great profusion, by the lives of the unnumbered saints and heroes who were immolated, by the supreme, the glorious sacrifice of the Prophet-Herald of our Faith, by the tribulations which its Founder Himself, willingly underwent, so that His Cause might live, His Order might redeem a shattered world and its glory might suffuse the entire planet – I adjure them, as this solemn hour draws nigh, to resolve never to flinch, never to hesitate, never to relax, until each and every objective in the Plans to be proclaimed, at a later date, has been fully consummated."

It is not the aim of this response to response the unfounded, poorly argued, purposely misleading, and shamefully violating the essentials of the Faith, deceptive in its approach of the article written by the so called universal house of justice created by erring ex-hands of the Faith, of outlining the objectives of the Ten Year Crusade. The reader's attention is drawn to the plan launched by the 1st guardian in 1953, to be celebrated its completion in the Garden of Ridvan in the vicinity of the city of Baghdad in 1963.

FUHH: "Over the thirty-six years of his ministry, as he guided the Baha'i world, striving to lay the foundations of the Administrative Order, Shoghi Effendi outlined specific developmental steps to be taken, which were intended to lead to the eventual establishment of the Universal House of Justice. The accomplishment of some depended largely on the exertions of the believers themselves – an increase in the number of Local and National Spiritual Assemblies, the appointment of the International Baha'i Council and its evolution into an elected body. Others, however, were subject to the forces operating in society and, no matter what the efforts made by the Baha'i community, could not be accomplished."

"In 1929, for instance, the Guardian stated, "given favourable circumstances, under which the Baha'is of Persia and of the adjoining countries under Soviet rule may be enabled to elect their national representatives ... the only remaining obstacle in the way of the definite formation of the International House of Justice will have been removed." Later, following the expulsion of Baha'is from Russia by the authorities, a letter written on his behalf explained, "At the time he referred to Russia there were Baha'is there, now the Community has practically ceased to exist; therefore the formation of the International House of Justice cannot depend on a Russian National Spiritual Assembly."

"In the same way, goals were specified by Shoghi Effendi for the establishment of Baha'i courts, including national courts in certain countries in Asia and, as a step in the development of the International Baha'i Council, the precursor to the Universal House of Justice, a court in the Holy Land. Recognition by the Egyptian government of the National Spiritual Assembly as an independent Baha'i court was sought as far back as 1929. Over time, changing conditions rendered the formation of such religious courts impossible.

As the Hands of the Cause of God commented in 1959 in calling for the election of the International Baha'i Council and the eventual establishment of the House of Justice,

"We wish to assure the believers that every effort will be made to establish a Baha'i Court in the Holy Land prior to the date set for this election. We should however bear in mind that the Guardian himself clearly indicated this goal, due to the strong trend towards the secularization of Religious Courts in this part of the world, might not be achieved."

ESY: Another excuse; "the forces operating in society and, no matter what the efforts made by the Baha'i community, could not be accomplished." In another words, the false house claims that Shoghi effendi could not understand these forces and made plans that were not achievable. The importance of this requirement of the evolution of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice into Baha'i Court can be comprehended by the text of the Will and Testament where 'Abdu'l-Baha clearly states that "This house of Justice enacteth the laws and the government enforceth them. The legislative body must reinforce the executive, the executive must aid and assist the legislative body so that through the close union and harmony of these two forces, the foundation of fairness and justice may become firm and strong, that all the region of the world may become even as Paradise itself." The fact is that the ex-hands were in hurry to create a false body and naming it universal house of justice as a means to deceive and direct the believers to the direction the ex-hands wanted to drag the believers into their desired direction. The ex-hands did not have any authority in the administration of the affairs of the Faith.

FUHHJ: "Yet another question that has been raised concerns the discharge by the Universal House of Justice of certain functions previously performed by the Guardian. With regard to Huququ'llah, 'Abdu'l-Baha has explained that "Disposition of the Huquq, wholly or partly, is permissible, but this should be done by permission of the authority in the Cause to whom all must turn." Likewise, the expulsion of Covenant-breakers is an obligation exercised by the Head of the Faith in the context of the duty to protect the Cause from those who would seek to undermine its unity. Shoghi Effendi, it is well known, was obliged to expel Covenant-breakers from the Faith at

different points throughout his ministry, both before and after the appointment of the Hands of the Cause of God. This responsibility now falls on the Universal House of Justice, as the centre of authority to whom all must turn. The current procedures followed in this respect are outlined in the statement "The Institution of the Counsellors."

ESY: The writer sent his letter of April 8, 1988 to Mr. H. Chance then a member of the so called universal house of justice and in that letter he stated "Another point you mentioned in the meeting was the payment of Huquq'u'llah by the believers. In fact in the last few years the believers have been educated to pay their Huquq'u'llah. The recent booklet in Persian on Huquq'u'llah is a compilation of writing on the subject. Unfortunately the administration failed to quote an important verse of the Will and Testament that says: "It is to be offered (Huquq'u'llah) through the Guardian of the Cause of God. . . ." The Guardian according to the Will and Testament is the sole recipient of Huquq'u'llah and nobody else is given the right to receive it.

As the name suggests, Huquq'u'llah is the right of God. It is given to his representative who is the Guardian. When we assume the termination of Guardianship, how can we change the writing and try to get what does not belong to us? It is given solely to the Guardian and he is given the right to use it as he wishes. When we know Huquq'u'llah is referred to the Guardian of the Cause, how can we change the verse of the Will and Testament to "Further, there devolve upon it (Universal House of Justice) the duties of directing the work of the Hands of the Cause... and of providing for the receipt and disbursement of Huquq'u'llah". In the same letter the writer wrote to Mr. H. Chance; 'If we follow the Hands' version of the Covenant, we are considered to be firm in the Covenant and everybody pays his or her respect. If someone starts to study the Covenant and learns the contents of the Will and Testament, the Dispensation of Baha'u'llah, and other material related to the Administration Order, he is picked up by the informers in our community. He is reported to higher levels of the Administration and new types of persecutions start; that is psychological persecutions. The first thing is to discredit him in the community and accuse

him of being an enemy of the Faith, a Covenant breaker, etc. It does not take very long before he finds himself without relatives and friends to turn to. This type of persecution is carried out against him without him realising what is happening to him. He is never given a chance to defend himself; suffering in silence is the result for the victim.

We have declared many believers to be Covenant breakers. We did so without having the slightest right to do so. The Guardian states it is the sole right of the Guardian of the Faith to declare a person a Covenant Breaker. In Persian he states:

“Expulsion and excommunication of the individuals from the Cause of God ... are part of the authorities of the Guardian namely the spiritual head of the Baha’i Community.”

(Neza'mat-e-Baha'i, 85)

“Reinstatement of the former covenant breakers is also one of the duties of the Guardian of the Faith.”

(Akh'bar-e-Am'ri, No. 106)”

In connection to the duties of the Guardian of the Faith and that of the Universal House of Justice, that neither can and will not infringe on each other domain; the 1st Guardian states: “Neither can, nor will ever, infringe upon the cared and prescribed domain of the other. Neither will seek to curtail the specific and undoubted authority with which both have been divinely invested.”[The Dispensation of Baha'u'llah, Shoghi Effendi, Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1938 page 150] The false house without any hesitation denies the continuation of Guardianship and infringes into the specific authorities of the Guardian of the Faith and claiming to be the head of the Faith and all must turn to.

As far as the head of the Faith is concern, the 1st Guardian states: “It should be born in mind that the Institution of Guardianship has been anticipated by ‘Abdu’l-Baha in an allusion He made in a Tablet addressed, long before His ascension, to three of His friend in Persia. To their question as to whether there would be any person to whom all the Baha’is would be called upon to turn after His ascension He made the following reply: ‘As to the question you have asked me, know verily that this is a well-guarded secret. It is even as a gem concealed within its shell. That it will be revealed is predestined. The time will come when its light will appear, when its evidence

will be made manifest, and its secrets unravelled.”

FUHH: “In this connection it should be noted that after the passing of Shoghi Effendi, although overwhelmed with grief, the Baha’i world maintained its unity during the tenuous period between his ministry and the election of the Universal House of Justice. The sole challenge to its integrity appeared some two years after his death when Charles Mason Remey, who was at that time one of the Hands of the Cause, laid claim to the Guardianship. As you are aware, Remey asserted that his appointment in 1951 as president of the nascent International Baha’i Council meant that he should automatically assume the position of head of the Universal House of Justice and was, therefore, the second Guardian.

“The absurdity of Remey’s claim is obvious and requires little elaboration. In 1957, he was among the Hands of the Cause who gathered in the Holy Land to consider what course of action should be taken following the unexpected passing of the Guardian. He personally affirmed that Shoghi Effendi had appointed no successor, signing a document issued unanimously by the Hands to this effect. Signatory to yet another such document, he agreed that the entire body of the Hands of the Cause would determine when and how the evolution of the International Baha’i Council would culminate in the election of the House of Justice. For two years, as one of the nine Hands designated to serve in the Holy Land, he participated in the consultations that guided the development of the Baha’i community. Then, without notice or discussion with his fellow Hands, he claimed the station of Guardianship, lacking explicit appointment by Shoghi Effendi as specified in the Will and Testament and in direct violation of the command of Abdu’l-Baha that no one could make such a claim. Exercising the authority conferred on them in accordance with ‘Abdu’l-Baha’s Will, the Hands of the Cause expelled him from the Faith as a Covenant-breaker.

ESY: There is no doubt that the institution of guardianship continues in the dispensation of the Baha’i Faith. No one except C. M. Remey was eligible to succeed his predecessor Shoghi Effendi. C. M. Remey initially sat with the rest of the former Hands of the Faith to maintain the unity during that turbulent time as Ali, the first Imam of the Faith of Islam did. Ali did not make any objection to the system of Khelafat and the leadership of

the first three Klalifs in early years of Islamic dispensation.

The reader's attention is drawn to part 1 of an article written by K. Taimouri published in RIDVAN issue of 9 & 10 August 2009 and reprinted in this issue of RIDVAN and part 2 of the same article in this issue of RIDVAN.

C.M. Remey sent three appeals to the ex-hands of the Faith and he constantly invited them to review their stand against continuation of the Guardianship. And prior to his 1960 proclamation of his Guardianship, he proclaimed himself as the second guardian of the Faith first to the ex-hands. The statement of the false house; "Then, without notice or discussion with his fellow Hands, he claimed the station of Guardianship" is not true.

The fact is that the Institution of Guardianship is not over as stated in the Writings. Accordingly there was 2nd Guardian of the Faith and no one could occupy that position except the head of the embryo of the Universal House of Justice, C. M. Remey. The ex-hands, the present false universal house of justice and their supporters were failed to recognize the second Guardian, C. M. Remey and in another words they failed the divine test put before them. The reader is invited to study an article on Divine Test by the writer published in RIDVAN issue of ... and reprinted in this issue of RIDVAN again.

FUHH: "In matters related to the Covenant, the friends must be firm and steadfast; they should be wary, lest the arguments put forward by those who sow seeds of doubt become the cause for confusion of lead to disputation and disunity. Should questions arise that cannot be resolved, they should be placed immediately before the Universal House of Justice. The friends must be especially careful to avoid being enticed by the whisperings of the remnants of the Covenant-breakers and their supporters, who seek to shake the believers' faith. Whereas in the past the violators of the Covenant sought to undermine the authority of Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi., today they challenge the Universal House of Justice. Of particular concern are those who, as Abdu'l-Baha warns, "assert their firmness and steadfastness in the covenant but when they come across responsive ears they secretly sow the seeds of suspicion."

ESY: To be firm in the Covenant as detailed by the 1st Guardian; one has to accept the Bab and Baha'u'llah as the promised one of the past Revelations, 'Abdu'l-Baha as the successor to Baha'u'llah and the centre the Covenant, acceptance, without any reservations, to every clause of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha, included in the Will, the continuation of the Guardianship and whatsoever revealed by their Pens. The ex-hands and presently the false universal house of justice redefined the covenant to deny continuation of the Guardianship, acceptance of the so called universal house of justice, a body without its head, the Guardian. In another words accepting the ex-hands of the Faith version of covenant made by them and supported by the present false universal house of justice is a criteria of one being firm in their version of covenant.

Soon or later the vial will be dropped and the present administration's mask of hypocrisy and deception will be removed and the true face of the inside enemies of the Faith will be seen by the people of the world and what has been done in the gloom of night by the unfaithful ex-hands of the Faith and their puppet, this false universal house of justice, will be shown to the whole world. It is a matter of time. The false house of justice is well aware that when one of their supper learn the material on the continuation of Guardianship will not respect the so called universal house of justice assumed authority.

FUHH: Remey's small band of associates, bedevilled by half a century of infighting among competing factions, have had negligible effect on the progress of the Faith. The flurry caused by their actions does nothing more than shake a few lifeless twigs and leaves from the tree of the Cause. Those who are naive, those who are not deepened in the Teachings or not firm in the Covenant, those who are controlled by their egos and lust for leadership can be misled and fall away. The friends are urged to protect themselves and their community by adhering strictly to the emphatic exhortations repeated throughout the Sacred Texts. As Abdu'l-Baha states,

ESY: At early history of Islam, there were a few people supported Ali, the 1st Imam of Islam. Although there were not much supporting Writings to support Ali, his Imamate was established and the truth

manifested itself. As to those opposed the second Guardian apart from the unfaithful ex-hands of the Faith, there is no difference between them and the ex-hands and the present false universal house of justice. The reader is assured that, as Shoghi Effendi stated: “The believers will erect the mighty stronghold of the Universal House of Justice before the eye of the people despite of the opposition by the relentless enemies of the Faith. When they [the believers] successfully achieve this objective, the greatest wish of our Lord will be fulfilled. Any institution that is not established in accordance with the Divine Order, not in conformity with the principles and the conditions recorded in the Holy Writings, as it is required for this august institution, consequently such an institution is void of credential, deprived of spiritual station, and forbidden to have any right to legislate and enact laws and ordinances which are not explicitly recorded in the Holy Writings. It also lacks the essential qualities and the Divine confirmation.”(Underline is writer’s) (Shoghi Effendi, extracted from letter of summer of 1925)

FUJH: “Unto the Most Holy Book every one must turn and all that is not expressly recorded therein must be referred to the Universal House of Justice. That which this body, whether unanimously or by a majority doth carry, that is verily the Truth and the Purpose of God Himself. Whoso doth deviate there from is verily of them that love discord, hath shown forth malice and turned away from the Lord of the Covenant. By this house is meant that Universal House of Justice which is to be elected from all countries, that is from those parts in the East and West where the loved ones are to be found, after the manner of the customary election in Western Countries such as those of England...

“And now, one of the greatest and most fundamental principles of the Cause of God is to shun and avoid entirely the Covenant-breakers, for they will utterly destroy the Cause of God, exterminate His Law and render of no account all efforts exerted in the past. O friends! It behooveth you to call to mind with tenderness the trials of His Holiness, the exalted One, and show your fidelity to the Ever-Blest Beauty. The utmost endeavour must be exerted lest all these woes, trials and afflictions, all this pure and sacred blood that hath been shed so profusely in the Path of God, may prove to be in vain...

“O ye beloved of the Lord! Strive with all your heart to shield the Cause of God from the onslaught of the insincere, for souls such as these cause the straight to become crooked and all benevolent efforts to produce contrary results.”

ESY: There is no doubt that the believers must turn to the Guardian of the Faith and the legitimate Universal House of Justice. But not to this false universal house of justice in which it is similar to anything but legitimate Universal House of Justice. In this dispensation the founder of the Faith, it’s Centre of the Covenant and the 1st Guardian has left the believers with vast body of Writings to support them against the old and the new enemies of the Faith from within.

FUJH: “The believers in the Cradle of the Faith, who have withstood for more than a century the onslaught of government and clergy, who triumphed over the perils posed by the rebellions of Azal and Muhammad ‘Ali, who severed themselves from those who opposed Shoghi Effendi, will easily discount the spurious and ridiculous arguments of those few individuals who vie among themselves to exploit Remy’s deviation as a pretext for attracting a handful of personal followers. Be assured of our supplications at the Holy Threshold on behalf of the beloved friends everywhere in that sacred land.

With loving Baha’i greetings,
[signed: The Universal House of Justice]”

ESY: The believers in Persia have sacrificed their lives for the Cause of God from the time the Bab declared His mission in 1844 and still continue to do so. But when they learn that the ex-hands and the present false universal house of justice have deceived them, they will do the same thing that they did in the past dispensation. Among all the Muslims of the world it was the Persians that discovered and supported the institution of the Imamatus. The Persians know well their responsibilities. The false universal house of justice’s advise is not needed.

The writer was born into and grew up in a Baha’i family in Persian. He had a very strong faith in the present administration prior to his investigation of the Institution of Guardianship and his acceptance of C.M. Remy as the 2nd Guardian. But when he

learnt that he has been deceived by this administration; he lost all his respect for this false universal house of justice. To him there is no separation between them and Azal, Mirza Muhammad Ali and the other unfaithful ones to the Covenant of Baha'u'llah.

To close this article the writer draws the reader's attention to the following quotations of the Kit'ab-i-Aqdas that the ex-hand by their action fulfilled Baha'u'llah's prediction;

اِنَّ الَّذِيْنَ نَكثُوْا عَهْدَ اللّٰهِ
فِيْ اٰمِرِهِ و نَكصُوا عَلٰى اَعْقَابِهِمْ اُولٰٓئِكَ
مِنْ اَهْلِ الضَّلٰلِ لَدٰى الْغَنِيِّ
الْمُتَعَالِ

They that have violated the Covenant of God by breaking His commandments, and have turned back on their heels, these have erred grievously in the sight of God, the All-Possessing, the Most High.

[From The Kit'ab-i-Aqdas Verse 2]

In relation to the same subject, the 1st Guardian writes: "We should feel truly thankful for such futile attempts to undermine our beloved Faith-attempts that protrude their ugly face from time to time, seem for a while able to create a breach in the ranks of the faithful, recede finally into the obscurity of oblivion, and are thought of no more." [World Order of Baha'u'llah, Shoghi Effendi, Baha'i Publishing Trust, 1955]

Prior to the death of the 1st Guardian the Hands of the Faith were faithful to the Covenant and when the 1st Guardian left this world the group of the Hands turned on their heels and violated the Covenant and fulfilled the prophecy.

I hope and pray to God that the reader is satisfied and has find the truth.

E.S. Yazdani

Sydney, Australia

February, 2010.

The World is in travail, and its agitation waxeth day by day. Its face is turned towards waywardness and unbelief. Its perversity will long continue. And when the appointed hour is come, there shall be suddenly appear that which shall cause the limbs of mankind to quake. Then and only then, will the Divine Standard be unfurled, and the nightingale of Paradise warble its melody.

A Review of a Proclamation Signed
By
Mason Remey and the Hands of the Cause
Dated Nov 25, 1957
Part 1
By
Kamran Taimouri

The Baha'i Faith has gone through some critical moments since it was established by its Prophet founder, Baha'u'llah. These crises often occurred during the transition time when the authority from one centre of the Faith was passed on to the next one. The physical death of Shoghi Effendi, the first Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, on November 4, 1957, was such a time that created a great concern among the adherents of the Faith regarding its fortune. The reason for it was that the great teachers of the Baha'i Faith, who were called then the Hands of the Cause, could not find an official sealed will and testament written by Shoghi Effendi. Based on the absence of such a will and testament, The Hands of the Cause started to make doubt on the continuity of the Guardianship of the Faith, an Institution which was to carry out the interpretation task in the course of at least a thousand year of the Baha'i Dispensation according to the Writings. Among the twenty seven Hands of the Cause, only Charles Mason Remey, an early American believer, strongly believed that the line of the Guardians of the Faith would not be disconnected after the passing away of Shoghi Effendi. However, on November 25, 1957, he signed a joint proclamation with the twenty six of fellow- Hands stating:

"Shoghi Effendi had left no Will and Testament. It was likewise certified that the beloved Guardian had left no heir. The Aghsan (branches) one and all are either dead or have been declared violators of the Covenant by the Guardian for their faithlessness to the Master's Will and Testament and their hostility to him named first Guardian in that sacred document. The first effect of the realization that no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him was to plunge the Hands of the Cause into the very abyss of despair. What must

happen to the world community of his devoted followers if the Leader [Shoghi Effendi], the Inspirer, the Planner of all Baha'i activities in all countries and islands of the seas could no longer fulfil his mission?" "As to the International Baha'i Council, appointed by the Guardian and heralded in his communications to the Baha'i world, that body will in the course of time finally fulfil its purpose through the formation of the Universal House of Justice "

"Meanwhile the entire body of the Hands, assembled by the nine Hands of the World Centre, will decide when and how the International Baha'i Council is to evolve through the successive stages outlined by the Guardian, culminating in the call to election of the Universal House of Justice by the membership of all National Spiritual Assemblies. When that divinely ordained Body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew and the measures necessary for its future operation determined in consultation with the Hands of the Cause." (The Ministry Of The Custodians; 1992 edition, pp. 35- 38)

From the above proclamation, it is understood that the Hands of the Baha'i Faith, in a matter of three weeks after the passing away of Shoghi Effendi, and in a state of confusion to which they called the "very abyss of despair," decided quickly to derive a conclusion that the first Guardian "had left no heir" and "no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him" . All of this was based on not finding an official will and testament written by him. We know the first Guardian of the Faith did not have much personal belongings and whatever real estate or banking accounts kept under his name were actually contributed to the Baha'i Faith by the believers. The heir to all of these would be the second Guardian or the whole Baha'i

World Community. In connection to the events shortly following Shoghi Effendi's passing, Mason Remey wrote:

"It was all more or less vague, hazy and indefinite in my thoughts, and so I succumbed, as did others, to the proposition of the Persian Hands of the Cause and a few others, who all together formed a ruling and united majority. So I accepted the dictum of this unity and signed the Proclamation [dated, Nov 25, 1957] to the Baha'i World along with all of the other Hands...There just did not seem to be any clear solution to the problem before us. All was more or less confused. Thus, the present regime of the Custodian Hands of the Faith came into working order, accepted by all of us, myself included." (A Statement By The Second Guardian Of The Faith, 1960)

Although the first Proclamation of the Hands dismissed the existence of a will and testament by Shoghi Effendi, but it left a door open to the hope of having a second Guardian of the Faith for it indicated that "all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew" by the future International House of Justice. This fact was reflected in a message by the Hands, dated November 4, 1959:

"At this turning-point in the Crusade when all our forces must be unitedly concentrated on winning its goals, the friends should not be deflected from the vital tasks confronting them by discussion of such subjects as can only be considered when the Universal House of Justice is established. Therefore we feel it is necessary to recall the words in the Proclamation we sent out after the passing of the beloved guardian : 'When that divinely - ordained Body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew and the measures necessary for its future operation determined in consultation with the Hands of the Cause.' This includes the subject of the Guardianship." (The Ministry Of The Custodians, p. 169)

The reflection of such a thought can also be realized in the statements of Ruhiyyih Khanum, one of the former Hands of the Cause and the wife of Shoghi Effendi. In the

Introduction to The Ministry Of The Custodians; 1992 edition, she stated:

"we were faced with problems of inconceivable magnitude. How to assume the reins of authority, with no document to support us, other than the general theological statements about the Hands? What was our legal status, on which hinged the delicate question that all the international financial assets of the Faith were in the name of Shoghi Effendi? What would we say about the Guardianship?" (Page 9)

"But there was one agonizing issue we could not agree on. Year after year we could come to no conclusion about whether the Guardianship was closed for the period of this Faith." (Page16)

There is a reference to this subject by [the] so called Universal House of Justice of the Baha'i World Community, issued on March 9, 1965, such as:

"The friends should clearly understand that before the election of the Universal House of Justice there was no knowledge that there would be no Guardian. There could not have been any such foreknowledge, whatever opinions individual believers may have held. Neither the Hands of the Cause of God, nor the International Baha'i Council, nor any other existing body could make a decision upon this all-important matter. Only the House of Justice had authority to pronounce upon it. This was one urgent reason for calling the election of the Universal House of Justice as soon as possible." (Wellspring of Guidance, Messages From UHJ; 1976 edition, Page. 45)

Mason Remey did not believe a Universal House of Justice without a Guardian as its president could remain permanently infallible for the rest of the Baha'i Era. Since he was appointed by Shoghi Effendi as the president of the International Baha'i Council, the "first embryonic International Institution," he was hoping that he would become the head of the future Universal House of Justice.

This could be possible, if the Hands of the Cause would follow the instructions of Shoghi Effendi as were outlined in his message to the Baha'i National

Assemblies of the East and the West, dated January 9, 1951. There is some evidence indicating Mason Remey was gradually trying to inform his fellow-Hands of the Cause that they should want a second Guardian of the Faith. We read in his Statement:

"That was in November, 1958. It was at this conclave that I found myself thoroughly awakened to the violation of the Hands of the Faith in their NOT WANTING the Guardianship. In this second conclave, the very word 'Guardianship' was becoming taboo." He adds, "I remained silent up until the last session when I arose, took the floor, and told the members of the conclave that they were violating the Will and Testament of the Master 'Abdul-Baha' in their attitude of not wanting a continuation of the Guardianship. My stand created a stir of indignation in the conclave. I was immediately silenced by several voices under the pretext that I was out of parliamentary order in bringing up a subject that had already been acted upon by the assemblage and was a closed issue. So that was that, and the conclave closed. However, in this moment so charged with emotion, I was asked why I took this stand in defence of the Guardianship against the united opinion of the conclave. To this my reply was that some one of us Hands should stand for the Administration with the Guardianship." (A Statement By The Second Guardian Of The Faith, 1960)

There is a mention of those years by a Persian Hand of the Cause, Mr. Furutan, while visiting Tehran, Iran, in about 1975. In a gathering of the Baha'i youths, in which the writer of this article had attended, Mr. Furutan talked of his memories during the time he and Mason Remey both were the members of Custodian Hands residing in Haifa. He said : "Mr. Remey used to say the Guardianship would continue. One day, I asked him if he knew who the next Guardian was. He replied, yes, yes. I asked him who that person was. Mr. Remey responded, search and find him." Mr. Furutan did not bring this up to show his sympathy but to ridicule Mason Remey. This saying of Mr. Furutan can be related with what Mason Remey wrote of his own thoughts shortly after Shoghi Effendi's passing : "at that time I thought that I might

become the Guardian of the Faith in some way or another, I did not know how."

Regarding the events after November 4, 1958, Mason Remey wrote : "In the conferences of the Custodian Hands in Haifa, following this second Behje Conclave, I told the Hands repeatedly that they were violating the Will and Testament [of Abdu'l-Baha]." He added:

"My refusal to sign the message of the Hands from the Third Behje Conclave to the Baha'i World, in November 1959, precipitated matters and eliminated me from the nine Custodians. Therefore, shortly after this, I left Haifa for Washington". (A Statement By The Second Guardian Of The Faith, 1960)

In a letter, dated June 30, 1960, by William Sears, a former Hand of the Cause, there are a few sentences which confirm the above statements. We read from that letter: "for two years, [Mason Remey] insisting, as you well know, that we the Hands should choose a Guardian. He called us 'violation' at the last meeting." (Ministry Of The Custodians, (Page. 217)

The reasons for which Mason Remey did not sign the message of the Hands on November 4, 1959, can be found in the same message and are considered as follow;

1. There was an indication that the Hands might not establish a Baha'i Court which was an "essential prelude to the institution of the Universal House of Justice" according to a Cablegram, dated April 25, 1951, by Shoghi Effendi.
2. The Hands had a plan for the April 1961, to dissolve the International Baha'i Council which its members were appointed by the first Guardian.
3. According to this plan, the Hands of the Cause were not to be considered for election to the new International Baha'i Council. This would leave out Mason Remey from the Council.
4. Election of a Universal House of Justice in Rid'van 1963, which was all premature to him.

In 1960, in the same Statement By The Second Guardian, he said: "Slowly, little by little, one thought led to another until I found myself considering the Beloved Guardian's appointment of me as the President of the International Baha'i Council...it was born into my consciousness that I, myself, Mason Remey, was actually then the protector of and the Guardian of the Faith and that I had been in this supreme station of protector -- that is, I had been the Guardian of the Faith -- ever since the death of the First Guardian."

One may ask how it is possible that a Chosen One of God may not know that he was appointed to the station of the Guardianship of the Faith as it seems to be in the case of Mason Remey. He in his STATEMENT of 1960, wrote: "In several of my writings I mention a momentary vision, that I had about the year 105 of the Baha'i Era [about A.D. 1948], in which I saw myself as the Second Guardian of the Faith. At that time, this seemed to me to be an absurdity of my imagination."

Perhaps we find a parallel to this by reading Ruhyyih Khanum's description of the event related to the very early Guardianship of Shoghi Effendi, such as: "he himself [Shoghi Effendi] stated on more than one occasion, not only to me, but to others who were present at the table of the Western Pilgrim House, that he had had no foreknowledge of the existence of the Institution of Guardianship, least of all that he was appointed as Guardian." (The Priceless Pearl; 1969 edition, Page 42)

Those who did not accept Mason Remey as the second Guardian of the Faith of Baha'u'llah questioned his action in signing with the other Hands of the Cause the joint Proclamation of November 25, 1957. To this his response was such as:

"The Second guardian of the Faith, then in occultation, in the capacity of a Hand of the Cause and President of the Baha'i International Council, sat with the Hands in this conclave. He knew at that time that this violation of the Guardianship was being perpetrated, but hoping to rectify this condition through friendly argument and

peaceful methods he agreed with the others, to keep in strict secret with them from the Baha'i World, all things that passed between the Hands of the Faith in their conclaves and conferences. For he hoped to be able to show them their errors and thus save them from their violation of the Faith. Thus two and half years or thereabouts of time passed, the while he was telling the Hands of their violation and begging them to reconsider their stand against the Guardianship -- But all to fail in the end in this endeavour." (An introduction to the Four Volumes Of Daily Observation Of The Baha'i Faith, 1960)

The Persian Baha'i believers who supported the Guardianship of Mason Remey have been saying that there is a similarity of the events at the early time of the Islamic Religious Era and the event following Shoghi Effendi's passing. In other word, the Religious history repeats itself and the concept of "Return" can be realized from the characters and actions of people in relation to the Chosen Ones of God. Any one who has studied the history of Shiah Islam is familiar with the dispute and contention of Muslims over the subject of Succession after the passing of Prophet Muhammad. According to Shiahs traditions, Muhammad during His life time publicly and verbally had appointed His son in-law, Ali, to be His successor. The overwhelming majority of Muslims in that time did not thought that the sayings of Muhammad could be a reference to His successor but to fellowship with Ali. The early relators of the traditions wrote the number of Ali's shiahs [followers] was from three to ten people. This happened as a result of the lack of a written will and testament by Prophet Muhammad, something that the force of opposition did not allow Him to produce. The same force made Ali to accept the vicegerency (Caliphate) of the three other disciples of Muhammad and brought him to sit in the Council of Caliphs and disciples. It took more than twenty three years until people asked him to govern them as the fourth Caliph of the Islamic World. In this connection, Shoghi Effendi stated: "Ali's appointment was clear to the khalifs [Caliphs], who actually disregarded the Prophet's [Muhammad's] oral statements. The usurpation occurred immediately after the

Prophet's death. Ali did not feel unqualified, but wished to avoid schism, which, unfortunately, could not be prevented." (*Lights of Guidance, A Baha'i Reference File, 1994 edition, p. 497*)

One of the subjects mentioned by the former Hands of the Cause in their Proclamation of November 25, 1957, was the Aghsan, a title given by Baha'u'llah to His Sons in His lineal descent. The word Aghsan in Arabic means branches, and in other than its specific usage in referring to His sons, was also referred to all Baha'i believers by Baha'u'llah in general. Apparently the Hands of the Cause did not consider the spiritual descent or the general application of the word aghsan. The Baha'is in the West and the East who accepted Mason Remey as the second Guardian of their Faith argued that there was another application to the meaning of the word aghsan and this could be understood by

reading the Tablets of Baha'u'llah, Abdu'l-Baha, and Shoghi Effendi's English translation of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha. Furthermore, they gave evidence from the Tablets of Abdu'l-Baha addressed to Mason Remey, in which he was referred as; "My beloved son," "beloved son of the kingdom," "My dear son," "My spiritual son," "My heavenly son," ...and etc. Shoghi Effendi had translated two or more of these Tablets in 1919, and was aware of the spiritual bond which existed in between Abdu'l-Baha and Mason Remey. At present time the Baha'i believers in continuation of the Guardianship of the Faith have held a hope the future generations will look into this matter with enthusiasm and faith and restore the Institution of the Guardianship upon Mount Carmel.



A Persian Painting Showing Traditional Persian Carpet Bazaar

A Review of a Proclamation Signed
By
Mason Remey and the Hands of the Cause
Dated Nov 25, 1957
Part 2
By
Kamran Taimouri

In continuation to what were reflected in the first part of this article, it should be said the Baha'i Faith went through a critical time after the passing away of the first Guardian, Shoghi Effendi. Overwhelming number of the Baha'is around the world were not aware of what really happened to their Faith in November 1957. The former Hands of the Baha'i Faith, who were appointed by Shoghi Effendi, unanimously signed a Proclamation on November 25, 1957, announcing to the believers that: 1. "Shoghi Effendi had left no Will and Testament." 2. "no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him." 3. "We Hands of the Cause have constituted a body of nine Hands to serve at the Baha'i World Centre." 4. "the entire body of the Hands, assembled by the nine Hands of the World Centre, will decide when and how the International Baha'i Council is to evolve through the successive stages outlined by the Guardian, culminating in the call to election of the Universal House of Justice." 5. "When that divinely ordained Body comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew." In addition to this, a few Resolutions were adopted by the Hands of the Cause at the same time; one of them stated: "the authority to expel violators from the Faith shall be vested in the body of nine Hands, acting on reports and recommendations submitted by Hands from their respective continents." (The Ministry Of The Custodians; UHJ, printed in Great Britain, 1992, pp. 28 - 39).

In this connection every individual Baha'i needs to examine the statements and promises of the former Hands of the Baha'i Faith in the light of the Baha'i scriptures and the writings of the first Guardian of the Faith in order to find whether the former Hands of the Cause of God kept the mass of the Baha'is in the dark or taught and acted accurately according to the writings of the Faith and Shoghi Effendi's Plan. The present time Baha'i Headquarters in Haifa, Israel, refuse to acknowledge Mason Remey as the second Guardian of the Baha'i Faith and blaming him for going against the proclamation that he signed with the other Hands of the Cause on November 25, 1957. They use this to say that he contradicted himself and cannot be accepted as an infallible Guardian. The fact is that Mason Remey in his capacity as a Hand of the Cause at first was obligated to exercise the duties and functions of a Hand, which was to teach the true concept and spirit of the Baha'i Faith, to protect the Baha'i world community and its properties from the attacks and harm of its enemies; and as he agreed with the other Hands of the Cause, to "correspond with National Assemblies on matters connected with the prosecution of the objectives of the Ten Year Plan."

On all of these, Mason Remey stood for his words as he promised his fellow Hands and the Baha'is around the world. One of the subjects in the Proclamation of the Hands of the Baha'i Faith was related to the Guardianship of the Faith. Mason Remey signed this Proclamation stating: "Shoghi Effendi had left no Will and Testament." Based on the absence of such a Will and Testament, which was supposed to be opened after the death of the deceased,

they concluded, “no successor to Shoghi Effendi could have been appointed by him.” That is to say there was not a Will appointing second Guardian. The Hands of the Cause knew they were not an infallible institution and could not come up with an authoritative explanation on such important issue. They left it out for the future Universal House of Justice to reconsider the matter and make a definite resolution on whether or not there would be a second Guardian of the Faith. The Proclamation of the Hands reads: “When that divinely ordained Body [Universal House of Justice] comes into existence, all the conditions of the Faith can be examined anew.” Later, in their message of November 4, 1959, the Hands clarified this statement by saying, “This includes the subject of the Guardianship.” (The Ministry Of The Custodians, p. 169).

Although the Proclamation of November 25, 1957 did not shatter the hopes of the believers for the advance of a second Guardian of the Baha’i Faith yet it raised concern among many of them regarding the future of their Faith. Mason Remey, who was a signatory of this proclamation, in this connection wrote: “[the Hands] all together formed a ruling and united majority. So I accepted the dictum of this unity and signed the Proclamation.” (A Statement By The Second Guardian Of The Faith, 1960).

In his “Daily Observations,” in 1958, Mason Remey wrote the Hands of the Cause were all united in protecting whatever was legally registered under Shoghi Effendi’s name “until they came to the most important of all- What to do about the Guardianship? Here the majority of the Hands of the Faith feel that nothing should be done by them, but others say why stop here and cry BADA? and thus abandon the Guardianship.” The doctrine of BADA is taught by Twelver Shi’is in Islam and was also upheld in the Babi Faith, but it was not taught as a doctrine of Faith by Baha’u’llah, the Prophet founder of the Baha’i Faith. BADA is referred to as a change in God’s will or plan. Baha’u’llah, in His

principal Book, The Kit’ab-i-Aqdas, revealed: “This is the Source of Revelation, the Dawning-place of Splendour, Whose brightness hath illumined the horizons of the world. Would that ye might understand! This is, verily, that fixed Decree through which every irrevocable decree hath been established.” Besides, Shoghi Effendi wrote: “The bedrock on which this Administrative Order is founded is God’s immutable Purpose for mankind in this day. The Source from which it derives its inspiration is no less than Baha’u’llah Himself...The axis round which its institutions revolve are the authentic provisions of the Will and Testament of Abdu’l-Baha.” (The World Order Of Baha’u’llah; edition 1974, p. 156).

Mason Remey, in his “Daily Observations,” Volume 2, pp. 1-2, stated that at the first Conclave of the 26 Hands of the Cause, “the youngest of the Persian Hands, sprang to his feet proposing that the Will and Testament of the Master Abdu’l-Baha be pronounced BADA and that the Guardianship be ended forever and closed forever.” Then this notion was immediately accepted by all the Persian Hands attending in the Conclave. In his “Daily Observations,” Volume 1, p.3, Mason Remey recorded, “BADA is a very dangerous stand for those to take who wish something other than God’s Plan - thus BADA is their last refuge.” During two years from November 1957 to November 1959, whenever there was an opportunity, whether in the meetings of the Custodian Hands or in the second and the third Conclaves of all Hands, Mason Remey told his fellow Hands that the Guardianship of the Faith could not be ended and they were violating the Blessed Master’s Will and Testament. In one of the pages of His “Daily Observations,” he stated: “I had not only no ideas to how the Faith was to get a Second Guardian, nevertheless at all

times I stood for the continuation of the Guardianship.” In November 1959, during the third Conclave of the Hands of the Baha’i Faith, he noticed the Hands were further departing from the objectives of the Ten Year Crusade of Shoghi Effendi by deciding to dissolve the first International Baha’i Council in April 1961, having an elected Body instead it before establishing a Baha’i International Court, and planning to ask the Baha’is not to elect the Hands of the Cause to the membership of the future international Council. Mason Remey refused to sign the Proclamation of the Hands dated November 4, 1959, and left Haifa for the United States. The next year, in April 1960, he sent out copies of his Proclamation of the Guardianship to the Baha’i National Spiritual Assemblies around the World and declared his station as the second Guardian of the Baha’i Faith. His announcement was based on being appointed to the presidency of the Embryonic Universal House of Justice by the first Guardian of the Faith.

Functions of the Institution of the Hands of the Cause

Towards the ending years of Shoghi Effendi’s life, the position of the Hands of the Cause in the Baha’i world community was similar to the position of the Cardinals of Roman Catholic Church, but with one difference that there was no priesthood in the Baha’i Faith. Each Hand of the Cause had to fulfil his/her twofold function of propagation and protection of the Faith under the direction and aegis of Shoghi Effendi who was then the head of the Baha’i world community. Abdu’l-Baha the authoritative interpreter of the Baha’i holy writings, in His Will and Testament, outlined the governing principles of the Baha’i Administration. On pages 12 and 13 of the same Will, we read: “The Hands of the Cause of God must be nominated and appointed by the guardian of the Cause of God. All must be under his shadow and obey his command. Should any, within or without the company of the Hands of the Cause of God disobey and seek division, the

wrath of God and His vengeance will be upon him, for he will have caused a breach in the true Faith of God.” Furthermore, He added: “They [the Hands] must manifest the fear of God by their conduct, their manners, their deeds and their words. This body of the Hands of the Cause of God is under the direction of the guardian of the Cause of God.” More than three decades after passing of Abdu’l-Baha, His grandson, Shoghi Effendi stated the Institution of the Hands of the Cause of God “destined to assume in the fullness of time, under the aegis of the Guardian, the dual sacred responsibility for protection and propagation of the Cause of Baha’u’llah.” (Messages To The Baha’i World; 1950-1957, Cablegram, April 6, 1954). All of these are an indication that the Hands of the Baha’i Faith individually or collectively as “the Chief Stewards of the Baha’u’llah’s embryonic World Commonwealth” were not immune from major errors or deviation from the path of the Faith . The only means could guide them in their work for the Cause of God and prevent them of possible tragic fall would be the direction of a second Guardian. During the six years Ministry of the custodian Hands from 1957 to 1963, they acted as a supreme head of the Baha’i world community without having any instruction by Shoghi Effendi to support them. One of the means, provided in the Will and Testament of ‘Abdu’l-Baha as an aid to a living Guardian, is a body of nine Hands of the Cause. Creation of this body is incumbent upon the Hands of the Cause according to the provision of the Will and Testament. The Guardian of the Baha’i Faith has no responsibility or obligation in calling for the election of such a body. We read on p. 12 of Abdu’l-Baha’s Will: “The Hands of the Cause of God must elect from their own number nine Persons that shall at all times be occupied in the important services in the work of the guardian of the Cause of God.” To the same body another obligation is given by Abdu’l-Baha, such as:

“these [nine elected Hands] whether unanimously or by a majority vote, must give their assent to the choice of the one whom the guardian of the Cause of God hath chosen as his successor. This assent must be given in such wise as the assenting and dissenting voices may not be distinguished (i.e., secret ballot).”

As it is evident from this passage, to the Hands of the Cause only one choice is given and that is to give their assent to the one who is been nominated by the Guardian as his successor. In response to a question raised by a believer regarding this passage of the Will and Testament, Shoghi Effendi stated: “The statement in the Will of Abdu'l-Baha does not imply that the Hands of the Cause of God have been given the authority to overrule the Guardian. Abdu'l-Baha could not have provided for a conflict of authority in the Faith. This is obvious, in view of His own words, which you will find on p. 13 [p. 11 of 1944 U.S. Edition] of the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha. 'the mighty stronghold shall remain impregnable and safe through obedience to him who is the guardian of the Cause of God. It is incumbent upon...the Hands of the Cause of God to show their obedience, submissiveness and subordination unto the guardian of the Cause of God, to turn unto him and be lowly before him. He that opposeth him hath opposed the True One', etc.” (Baha'i News, February 1955).

In the contrary to what is practiced by the Cardinal-priests of Roman Catholic Church in their Conclaves, the Hands of the Baha'i Faith have not been given authority to appoint or remove a Guardian to and out of his office or to oppose his chosen successor. During the Ministry of the first Guardian, the elected Body of the nine Hands did not come into existence. At the first Conclave of the Hands after the passing away of Shoghi Effendi, the twenty six Hands of the Baha'i Faith who

were present at the Conclave made decision to elect nine among themselves to act on their behalf as the Custodian of the Baha'i World Faith.

Mason Remey was elected to this Body along with the eight others. Here they realized they had to use some legal terms in order to be able to transfer and protect all of the properties and bank accounts which were registered under Shoghi Effendi's name to the Custodians' name. One of their Resolutions reads: “The Custodians shall be deemed to succeed the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith.” Later in December 2, 1957, in a letter to all Baha'i National Assemblies, the Custodians wrote: “Our lawyer advises us that we should also obtain from each National Assembly a letter recognizing us as the supreme body in the Cause, and this letter should include the following sentence: We pledge our full support, faith and allegiance to the body of the Custodians of the Baha'i World Faith elected by the Hands of the Cause.” (The Ministry Of The Custodians; p. 40). This is unprecedented in the History of the Baha'i Faith that a group of the Hands of the Cause to assume for themselves so much authority. The full effect of it became evident in April 1960, when Mason Remey sent his proclamation of the Guardianship to the Baha'i National Assemblies over the world. The National Spiritual Assembly of France was the first among them to be dissolved by the Custodians because of its support of Mason Remey as the second Guardian. Even though, the French National Assembly was the highest Administrative Institution of that country and had voted by majority votes in favour of Mason Remey. Meanwhile, some local Baha'i Spiritual Assemblies were dissolved for the same reason in other countries.

Creation of the Embryonic Universal House of Justice

Shoghi Effendi created an International Baha'i Council, in 1951, which in his message of January 9, he praised it as the “forerunner of supreme administrative

institution,” and “most significant milestone in evolution of Administrative Order of the Faith of Baha’u’llah,” and “first embryonic International Institution,” and “potentially unsurpassed by any enterprise undertaken since inception of Administrative Order of Faith.”

On March 2, 1951, he announced to the Baha’is of the East and the west that Mason Remey was the President and Amelia Collins the Vice-President of the International Baha’i Council. The news of this appointment was echoed in other messages of Shoghi Effendi in the late years of his life. When the first Guardian of the Faith passed away on November 4, 1957, many countries heads of states already knew the International Baha’i Council was a highest ranking Baha’i Administrative Institution. The Jerusalem Post, in Israel, dated November 18, 1957, wrote such as: “A memorial ceremony for His Eminence Shoghi Effendi Rabbani, World Head of the Baha’i Faith, who died in London on November 4, was held this afternoon at the shrine of Baha’u’llah.” In the last paragraph, it was read: “Messages of condolence continue to arrive at the International Baha’i Council from all parts of the world, from government heads, educators and people from all walks of life.” (The Ministry Of The Custodians, pp. 26-27).

In November 1957, the Hands of the Baha’i Faith did not consider the International Baha’i Council as a supreme governing Baha’i Institution. But they wanted rather to elevate an elected body of the nine Custodian Hands as a supreme body of the Baha’i world community. Perhaps the reason for such a decision was that they did not want the president of the International Baha’i Council to be seen in the eyes of the public like a Second Guardian. Ruhiyyih Khanum, the wife of Shoghi Effendi, and a Hand of the Faith wrote: “In the meetings of the Custodians [Hands] ... We had decided, from the time of our first Conclave that, in order to protect the Cause of

God, we would have no officers, such as President, Chairman, Secretary, etc. lest one of the male Hands, holding such a position, should begin to assume in the eyes of the Baha’is the function of the leader, and, God forbid, begin to be seen as a sort of second Guardian in importance.” (From page, 12 of the Introduction to “The Ministry Of The Custodians”). Mason Remey, in his Proclamation in 1960, stated that Shoghi Effendi appointed him to the presidency of the International Baha’i Council for which he would become the President of the first Universal House of Justice, if that happened during Mason Remey’s life. According to him this position belonged only to the Guardian or his successor. Mason Remey’s reasoning was based on Shoghi Effendi’s statements that made the Council the “first embryonic International institution.” This would make the Council the embryo of the future Universal House of Justice. There are some references to this fact which is necessary to be mentioned here. Among them there is a report by the International Baha’i Council on July 1, 1952, confirming that “the Universal House of Justice, the embryo of which is the present International Baha’i Council, which through successive stages will develop into the Universal House of Justice.” (The Baha’i World; Vol. xii 1950-1954, p. 388). The former Hand of the Cause, Mrs. Amelia Collins who was the Vice-President of the same Council, at a Baha’i Conference held in Frankfurt/Main, Germany, July 25-29, 1958, addressed the audiences such as: “Shoghi Effendi reared strong national bodies. He brought into being the International Baha’i Council- the embryonic Universal House of Justice.” (A Tribute To Shoghi Effendi; by Amelia Collins, NSA of U.S.A., p. 8).

In bringing the Administrative Institutions of the Faith into existence, the first Guardian used the same pattern which exists in the nature as had been taught by Abdu’l-Baha: “When you consider this universal system, you see that there is not one

of the beings which at its coming into existence has reached the limit of perfection. No, they gradually grow and develop, and then attain the degree of perfection.” (Some Answered Questions; Wilmette, Ill. :Baha’i Pub. Trust, pocket-size edition 1984, p. 199). Shoghi Effendi stated: “He [Abdu’l-Baha] reared the embryonic institutions, administrative, spiritual, and educational, of a steadily expanding Faith.” (God Passes By; Wilmette, Ill. 1950, p. 268). Again regarding the rise of the Baha’i Administration, he wrote: “the institution of both local and national Assemblies which in their embryonic stage were already functioning in the days preceding Abdu’l-Baha’s ascension.” (The World Order of Baha’u’llah; Wilmette, Ill. edition 1974, p. 147).

On June 6, 1922, nine individual Baha’is met with each other in London, England, to form the first “All England Baha’i Council.” This National Council acted like a National Spiritual Assembly, even though it was not elected by England local Baha’i Assemblies. Shoghi Effendi was pleased with this undertaking by stating: “I need hardly tell you how grateful and gratified I felt when I heard the news of the actual formation of a National Council whose main object is to guide, co-ordinate and harmonize the various activities of the friends.” The first National Spiritual Assembly of England was elected in London on 13 October 1923. (Unfolding Destiny; Baha’i Pub. Trust, London, 1981, pp. 9-13). On March 19, 1922, to a professor of the American University in Beirut, Shoghi Effendi wrote:

“Abdu’l-Baha in his testament has appointed me to be the head of the universal council which is to be duly elected by national councils representative of the followers of Baha’u’llah in different countries.” (The Priceless Pearl; London, 1969, p.49).

To the future International House of Justice, the Guardian referred as the “Supreme

Council.” One of his letters reads: “the International House of Justice, that Supreme Council that will guide, organize, and unify the affairs of the Movement throughout the world.” (Principles of Baha’i Administration; London, edition 1963, p. 71). In 1947, Shoghi Effendi prepared a summary of the Baha’i teachings for the United Nations special Committee on Palestine and wrote these words: “Administrative Order...whose foundations are now being laid by the national and local councils which are elected by the professed adherents of the Faith, and which are paving the way for the constitution of the World Council, to be designated as the Universal House of Justice, which, in conjunction with me, as its appointed Head and the authorized interpreter of the Baha’i teachings, must coordinate and direct the affairs of the Baha’i community.” (The Faith Of Baha’u’llah; Wilmette, Ill, NSA, 1966, p.11). In all the above selected passages, the first Guardian referred to the Baha’i local, National, and International Assemblies as council whether they were appointed or elected.

Mason Remey in his Proclamation stated that the actual head of the International Baha’i Council was Shoghi Effendi himself for all the activities of the Council were directed and requested by him “But with the death of Shoghi Effendi, He no longer being the centre upon earth of infallibility, I became the acting President of the International Council in my own right As President of this body.” He further stated this made him the second Guardian of the Faith after the death of Shoghi Effendi.

The former Hands who opposed Mason Remey argued that the International Baha’i Council was just an international secretariat that Shoghi Effendi wished to have at the early years of his Guardianship. There is a letter dated December 1926 by the first Guardian which proves to the contrary of such

notion; it reads: “two representative Baha’is ... I have asked to come here to consider with me and with other Baha’is from the East the formation of an International Baha’i Secretariat as a preliminary step to the establishment of the International Baha’i Council.”(The Priceless Pearl; London, 1969, p. 249). From the above passage it is evident that the so called International Secretariat was considered by the Guardian as a preliminary step and not as the same as equal with the International Baha’i Council. The history of the Administration of the Faith indicates that the International Secretariat never came into existence. Instead it, Shoghi Effendi took a much greater step and created the International Baha’i Council In 1951.

The subject of the birth right and the spiritual descendent

From the ancient time the first son had held an advantage over his siblings on the subject of inheritance from their parents. In the Old Testament, the first-born son had a double portion of his father’s inheritance. (Deuteronomy: Ch 21: 15-17). We read in the book of Genesis regarding the issue of the birth right among two sons of Isaac, “**And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die [of hunger for food]: and what profit shall this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, swear to me this day; and he sware unto him; and he sold his birthright unto Jacob.**” (Ch 25: 32-33).

Shoghi Effendi wrote: “**hereditary principle which, as Abdu'l-Baha has written has been invariably upheld by the Law of God. " In all the Divine Dispensations," He states, in a Tablet addressed to a follower of the Faith in Persia, "the eldest son hath been given extraordinary distinctions. Even the station of prophethood hath been his birthright.**” (The World Order Of Baha’u’llah; Wilmette, Ill. Edition, 1974, p. 148).

By looking into the history of the past religions, we learn that even though the law of

primogeniture was upheld by the prophets of the past, yet in some cases when they did not have a son from their own blood line, they chose someone as their successor who had not been a direct blood descendent of the prophet. For instance, Prophet Moses appointed Joshua, Jesus chose Peter, and Mohammed chose his son-in-law, Ali, to be their successors upon their death according to the Baha’i writings. None of these men were a direct descendent of their respective founder of the Faith. It is logical that the same hereditary principle should be upheld in the Baha’i Faith for it “**has been invariably upheld by the Law of God**” as Abdu’l-Baha stated. The Will and Testament of Abdu’l-Baha must have provided for the continuation of the Guardianship, if a qualified son in Guardian’s lineal decedents there could not be found. In this case, the Will indicates: “**should he [first-born son to the Guardian] not inherit of the spiritual within him (the guardian of the Cause of God) and his glorious lineage not be matched with a goodly character, then must he, (the guardian of the Cause of God) choose another branch to succeed him.**” Here the word “**branch**” is a translation of the word, “ghosn / Ghosn” as appeared in the original Text. Shoghi Effendi would not translate this word with small letter, if it was classified only as a title. This is an indication that the metaphor of “**branch**” does not necessarily refer to a descendent of Baha’u’llah, but it can be any male believer who is firm in the Covenant of God. It should be said that Arabic and Persian languages lack capital and small letters. Therefore, in translating Abdu’l-Baha’s Will and Testament from its original language into English, Shoghi Effendi capitalized any specific name or title according to the context of the Will. He as an authoritative interpreter of the Baha’i Faith was the only one who could reveal the hidden meanings of the words in the Will and Testament. From the historical point of view when Abdu’l-Baha wrote the first part of His Will and Testament, it was about 1907. Then one of the Baha’i properties (endowments) such as the Shrine of

Baha'u'llah in Bahji, Akka, in Israel, was in the hand of his half-brother, Ghosn-i-akbar, who was also his arch enemy. The other half-brothers of Abdu'l-Baha each had the title of "Ghosn" and were opposed to Abdu'l-Baha's spiritual leadership. According to the holy book of the Baha'i Faith, The Kitab-i-Aqdas, the sons of the Prophet-founder of the Faith were the first category among the believers who were given the authority to protect or to spend the endowments for the religious purpose. Abdu'l-Baha did not have a son from His own blood line and appointed His grandson, Shoghi Effendi, to be His successor upon His death. It was necessary for Abdu'l-Baha to refer to Shoghi Effendi as the "chosen branch" (ghosn) in order to provide enough legal ground for him to protect the Baha'i endowments. For the same reason, Abdu'l-Baha referred to Shoghi Effendi's successor as "another branch," providing for the usage of this word and the protection of the Baha'i endowments, if it was required. The same Will and Testament declares: "it is incumbent upon the guardian of the Cause of God to appoint in his own life-time him that shall become his successor that differences may not arise after his passing." (p.12).

This statement by Abdu'l-Baha does not instruct Shoghi Effendi to write a sealed will and testament in order to be opened after his death. On the contrary, He makes it incumbent upon

the first Guardian to appoint his own successor during his life time. It would be entirely up to the Guardian how and on what method to introduce his appointed successor. The introduction could be direct or indirect. Shoghi Effendi was aware that the male lineal descendents of Abdu'l-Baha had a birth right to succeed him, if they were spiritual and faithful to Baha'u'llah's Covenant. But this was not the case for they broke away with him years later. On November 12, 1944, Shoghi Effendi stated: "Comforted, strengthened by assurance of sympathy and loyalty of American believers in the deplorable, delicate situation created by dishonourable alliance made by members of my family,

first with Covenant-breakers and now with external enemies of the Faith." He moreover concerning them wrote: "those whose acts proclaim their severance from the Holy Tree and their forfeiture of their sacred birthright." (Messages To America; Wilmette, Ill, 1947, p. 75).

In April 1956, the Guardian addressed the believers: "He [Baha'u'llah] Who has led them to achieve such triumphs, and to store up such prizes in His Kingdom, will continue to assist them in enriching their spiritual birthright to a degree that no finite mind can imagine or human heart perceive." (Messages To The Baha'i World 1950-1957; Wilmette, Ill, 1995, p. 102). To the American Baha'i Community he referred, "the spiritual descendent of the dawn-breakers of an heroic Age." (The Advent Of Divine Justice; Wilmette, Ill, 1984, p. 7). Again, on April 29, 1953, Shoghi Effendi addressed them: "the spiritual descendent of the dawn-breakers of the Heroic Age of the Baha'i Faith." (Citadel of Faith; Wilmette, Ill, 1970, p.109). From these statements it is understood that the spiritual birthright can replace the physical birthright, and also the Spiritual descendents may take the Place of physical descendents when it comes to the succession of the Guardians. Baha'u'llah wrote: "God, in the former [holy] books, called all of His servants His son, and this is as a result of the diffusions of Lights from the Day-Star of compassion which have surpassed all."

(Iqtidarat Va Chand Lawh-i-digar, p. 4). Besides, in one of His book, Baha'u'llah stated: "The Primal Point [the Bab], which may all make a sacrifice for Him, was the Tree of Divine Manifestation and all the adherents of His Faith are counted as His leaves, branches (aghsan), twigs (afnan), and fruits." (Kitab-i-Badi; Zero Palm Press Ltd. 1992, p. 79). Here, the metaphors of "aghsan" and "afnan" are used in their general concept and not as the titles to certain

categories of the believers who were descendents of Baha'u'llah or the Bab. In a Tablet, Abdu'l-Baha stated: "the line of descendents is divided into two kinds. One is the physical descendents and the other spiritual. One is born of water and earth, and the other is born of soul and heart. When the two gather, it becomes light upon light." (Maidiy-i-Asmani; Part-2, First Indian edition October 1984, p. 275).

Shoghi Effendi knew that Mason Remey had received Tablets from Abdu'l-Baha in which referring to him as "my son." This can be realized from a written statement on a package that Shoghi Effendi gave to him. In his "A Pilgrimage to the Holy Land," dated 1922, p. 48, Mason Remey described: "Just before I left Haifa Shoghi Effendi came to me with a sealed package containing some of the precious blood and some of the priceless hair of Baha'u'llah, delivering this to me as a most treasured possession. The

inscriptions upon the outer and the inner cover of this precious package read as follows: "Of all the remnants of Baha'u'llah's all sacred person, the most hallowed, the most precious confidentially delivered in the hands of my brother and co-worker in the Cause of God, Mr. Remey. (Signed) Shoghi. March, 1922. "Coagulated drops of Baha'u'llah's all sacred blood and ringlets of His most Blessed Lock presented as my most precious possession to Abdu'l-Baha's dear son, Mr. Charles Mason Remey, as a token of my Baha'i affection and brotherly love. (Signed) Shoghi. (Sealed with the Greatest Name)."

Many of the writings of Mason Remey are available for the public to read at the U.S. Library of Congress and some Major libraries in the other countries.



Closing the Gap

By

Anita Coryell

March 1, 2010

History is not an exact science; instead, it is interpretation. While many people like to think of history as dates and places and people, these things constitute only the building blocks of history. History is a matter of how things happen—and why. Who, what, and where never tell the story; they provide only the foundation for the story. There's been over 100,000 books written about World War I alone; it is the most written about war in history, and yet no two accounts are exactly alike. In any history, dates must coincide and so must places. Depending on the historian, monumental players and events are usually the same. Yet when it comes to the causes of World War I, and the results, every history varies, some slightly, others demonstrably.

If names and dates constitute the building blocks of history, they can be thought of as the raw materials. Make no mistake: as raw materials, they are instrumental to success. They lend credibility and stability to the historian and the project. Like any foundation, without superior materials the results are faulty and cumbersome. No one wants to read a history filled with inaccuracies and misinformation. The true beauty of a structure, however, lies not in the raw materials but in the shape that is given to them. Such form comes from a skillful architect, an artist with vision. Hand two architects the exact same materials and each will produce a different edifice.

Like the architect, the historian provides the blueprint and the sublime end result. Working with key events and players, the historian takes the facts and pieces them together to find the reasons things happened as they did, what went wrong or right, and who is responsible for certain events and their consequences. The choices made by the historian at this juncture are crucial. These choices include the questions the historian asks of the times and its people. Not every historian will agree on the pivotal characters in any given event, however, or what

constitutes the most important incidents. Every historian asks different questions.

History is equally dependent on time. Most historians will not even attempt to interpret an event until a minimum of fifty years has passed. Precious and revealing documents typically stay out of sight until then; governments often impose gag rules on documents for a full fifty years. Decades must pass before time exposes cause and effect and the nature of events is made clear. For this reason, we cannot definitively know if George H. Bush's policies in Iraq were beneficial or detrimental. We can surmise, but we cannot know conclusively until we see the results his course of action wrought. That takes time.

If history is not exact, and no two historians will ever view the same history in the exact same way, how is anyone to know history's truth? Quite likely, we aren't. Like the historian, people must investigate many accounts of one story, scour documents and letters surrounding events, and come to conclusions based on their intellect and moral character. Baha'is call this process independent investigation of the truth. As Baha'is, we also pepper our investigation with prayer, consultation, and spiritual awareness. Not all historians do this, but some likely do even though it would be inappropriate in a secular history to mention it. Even with the best research and documentation, however, an event can be confusing and what exactly happened unknowable. Do we really know what caused the Cold War and the breakdown between two countries that fought side by side for four years? It all depends on what historian you turn to. I know what I think, based on my own research; and it may be the truth or simply pieces of the truth.

For these reasons, and no doubt more, the history of 1957 and the subsequent years that followed Shoghi Effendi's death have been interpreted differently. It has been fifty-five years since Shoghi Effendi died, just past the fifty-year mark most historians consider necessary to obtain an accurate reading on

what happened. Unfortunately, few documents exist that tell us the parameters and human emotions surrounding the years 1957-1960. Unlike some historical events, such as World War II, we have very few letters, memoirs, and personal accounts that document what transpired after Shoghi Effendi died.

To my knowledge, a list of what we do have follows: 1) Mason Remey's *Daily Observations*, the only extant memoir, that we know about, of a Hand who lived through those times; 2) *The Ministry of the Custodians*, the story of the years 1957-1963 told from the Hands point of view, edited by Ruhyyih Khanum; and 3) the personal testimonies of believers who lived through those times. For example, Charles Gaines of the Lancaster LSA wrote a three-part defense on the guardianship. Likewise, local and national assemblies who accepted [C.M.] Remey's claim in 1960 wrote various documents, some in tandem and others individually, stating the reasons for their decision to support Mason Remey. All of these testimonials can be considered primary resources.

In addition, we must certainly count 'Abdu'l-Baha Will and Testament as part of the documentation available, as it is the definitive text on the guardianship, its role, and the conditions of appointment. Every passage in the Holy Writings that makes mention of the guardianship must also be counted and researched. Most of these passages come from translations made by Shoghi Effendi, and his definition of the guardianship in *The World Order of Baha'u'llah* demonstrates his devotion and belief in the sacredness of the institution. Therefore, Shoghi Effendi's Writings constitute a valuable resource. Lastly, many of Shoghi Effendi's letters written prior to his death are resources that can shed light on the tumultuous years 1957-1960.

Given the small body of evidence that exists, interpreting this history would be difficult for even the most talented scholar. How many people can honestly say they have made a thorough investigation of what happened in the years 1957-1960, wading through all the resources that exist and carefully weighing the available documentation? I have copies of most of the

documents named, but I do not feel competent to write a history of those years. Too much information is simply missing. What happened to the other twenty-five Hands who met in conclave in the days immediately following Shoghi Effendi's death?

It is well known that the conclaves were conducted in secret and that no minutes exist of these clandestine meetings. This, in and of itself, constitutes a nightmare for the historian. Imagine the repercussions if the meetings between Churchill, Stalin, and Roosevelt were conducted without the benefit of written notes? To meet in secret is one thing; to not record the proceedings for posterity is yet another. Without records, there is no way to judge the accuracy of claims and accusations. Everything becomes hearsay and innuendo. Were there Hands other than Mason Remey who objected to the dissolution of the guardianship? Were there Hands who had doubts, but felt obliged, for whatever reason, to go along with the status quo? Did Remey actually make objections as he claims he did in his diaries? Did all the Hands agree, regardless of Mason Remey's objections? How strong was the argument to dissolve the guardianship? How weak? What debates ensued? Did [C.M.] Remey argue for continuation, only to be shunned or ignored in his objections? Did he remain silent, only to emerge three years later, claiming to be the guardian? Where are the other diaries, personal accounts, and memoirs? Surely Mason Remey is not the only Hand who kept a journal of these times? Such an idea is preposterous, given the importance of the decisions being made; and yet, if they exist, where are they? Only Shoghi Effendi's wife shared her feelings, in the introduction to *Ministry*, and this is only one account at best. Did families choose to keep memoirs hidden, or were they never written? Fifty-five years later and nary a clue exists of what happened in those meetings. How many Baha'is have actually read Mason Remey's diaries, the sole record available that documents the Hands' secret meetings? Mason Remey was beloved by 'Abdu'l-Baha and called him a beloved son. How can anyone make an accurate assessment, an independent investigation of the truth, without reading them? Paradoxically, how can anyone make an

accurate assessment based on just one document?

The Hands were not the only players during those years. How did the Baha'i membership respond when they were told, in 1957, that there was no guardian? The Baha'i world fully expected a guardian, had been taught by Shoghi Effendi that the Faith would be illegitimate without one. Surely there were questions asked and protests raised when the Hands announced that the guardianship had come to an end. What happened to these protests, and why are they never mentioned or discussed?

The small article "Mason Remey and Those Who Followed Him," [.....], sums up the entire history of 1957-1960 in one and a half pages. The author does not question the Hands authority even though 'Abdu'l-Baha Will and Testament states that the Hands derive their authority from the guardian and are under his direction. In the introduction to *The Ministry of the Custodians*, Ruhiiyyih Rabbani admits that the Hands had no document per se to corroborate their authority in 1957; they went forward nonetheless. The question must be asked: If there is no guardian, can the Hands still function as a legitimate body? This is a crucial question and one any serious historian would ask. We know this question was asked by those who contested the Hands in 1960 when Mason Remey made his proclamation; it continues to be asked today. Although Shoghi Effendi's wife admitted to having no document that gave the Hands authority in 1957, little has been done to substantiate the Hands' self-appointed authority immediately following the death of Shoghi Effendi.

Much ado has been made about the statement in 'Abdu'l-Baha Will that the Hands must give their consent to the appointment of the guardian's successor. One interpretation of this statement renders that the Hands have no choice but to give their consent; another interpretation asserts that if the Hands do not give their consent, the person chosen cannot be the guardian. The latter seems unlikely; why would a group of people, appointed by the guardian and under his direction, be given the prerogative to consent to his appointment? It seems more likely that the Hands are required to give their consent and that objecting is not an option.

However, it is open to interpretation—one of those shady realities of history. How much research has been rendered to this portion of the Will and its interpretation?

Another point posed in the article describes the first action taken by the Hands: the search of Shoghi Effendi's quarters, looking for a will that names his successor. The question must be asked: Where does it state that the successor must be appointed in a will? A careful reading of 'Abdu'l-Baha Will and Testament clearly shows that a will is not necessary, only an appointment. 'Abdu'l-Baha does not even pen the word "will." What seems to offer more guidance in this matter is the Will's condition that it is "incumbent" upon the guardian to appoint in his lifetime one that will succeed him, so differences do not arise after his passing (ahem). The word "incumbent" is strong and open to very little interpretation. It seems improbable that Shoghi Effendi would disregard an obligation put forth in his grandfather's Will and Testament. If he did not, then we must ask ourselves how the appointment was made. If he did, then there never was an appointment and the Baha'i Faith, as defined by Shoghi Effendi in *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*, is, in essence, quite dead. In fact, a careful reading of *The Ministry of the Custodians* does depict the Baha'i Faith, as delineated in the Writings, as quite obsolete. No matter how one interprets the events of the past fifty-five years, Shoghi Effendi is quite clear in the *Dispensation of Baha'u'llah*: the World Order is a democratic monarchy, not a republic, and a living guardian sits at the head of the Universal House of Justice with one vote, no veto, and the power to interpret the proceedings according to the Word. Without these stipulations in place, there is no Kingdom of God and there is no Baha'i Faith. There is simply imitation.

Given that, did Shoghi Effendi appoint his successor in the form of the head of the embryonic Universal House of Justice as Mason Remey claimed? Clearly, Shoghi Effendi appointed Remey to be the president of the International Baha'i Council (IBC) in all those famously quoted cablegrams of 1951; and clearly the IBC was the embryonic Universal House of Justice, as stated by Shoghi Effendi. But was this appointment

meant to take the place of a more clearly stated appointment of a successor? If so, why didn't Shoghi Effendi come right out and say he was appointing Mason to be his successor? There are those who claim that, at the time, circa 1951 and beyond, the believers knew Remey was the designated successor to Shoghi Effendi and they accepted it as fact; when asked, as I asked Leland Jensen in 1979, who the Baha'is thought the successor would be, the answer was that people expected Mason to be the next guardian. Unfortunately, people's verbal opinions don't count much as historical evidence. What people thought, after the fact, is seldom counted as documentation.

That leaves us back where we started. Was Shoghi Effendi's appointment of Remey as the president of the IBC a *de facto* appointment of the next guardian? There were many who accepted [C. M.] Remey's claim, not just individuals, but whole LSA's who felt convinced, in 1957 and subsequent years, that there had to be a successor to Shoghi Effendi. To their way of thinking, the whole essence of the Faith depended on it. A few individuals mentioned in the article, Jensen and King and Carre, are singled out as ring leaders, yet their corruptions happened much later. The spiritual assemblies who accepted Remey's claim in 1960 staked their faith in God on the continuation of the guardianship. Charles Gaines, a member of the Lancaster spiritual assembly, wrote a three-part treatise in defense of Mason Remey's claims. This document is available online. Yvonne Barrett, who traveled as a pioneer in the 1950s with her husband Jimmy Barrett, felt convinced the Hands had done away with the guardianship, a decision that, according to many testimonies, was not theirs to make. According to Barrett, those who questioned the Hands during the years 1957-1960 faced harassment and expulsion. What few testimonies do exist of these days confirm that the Hands did not want anyone questioning their decision to declare "Bada"—a Persian word meaning God had changed his mind regarding the continuation of guardianship. Bada, however, was unconscionable in the minds of many Baha'is when it was first put forth by the Hands in 1958. There are Baha'is today who feel a

Baha'i Faith without a living guardian is impossible, a paradox.

For many Baha'is in 1958-59, leaving the Baha'i Faith was not an option but a directive. The LSAs that put forth statements denouncing the Hands and accepting Mason Remey's claims include Quincy, Illinois; Joplin, Missouri; members of the French NSA; and Baha'is from the spiritual assemblies of Rawalpindi and Lahore, Pakistan. No doubt there were others. As the believers voiced their statements and their acceptance, the Hands labeled each one a covenant-breaker and listed their name publicly as someone to be shunned and discounted. Pleas by long-term, upstanding Baha'is were disregarded. Letters written by Shoghi Effendi when he was still alive stating that only a guardian can declare someone a covenant-breaker went ignored. Many of these Baha'is are now dead, another problem with this history. The case is not much different in 2010, however, than it was in 1959. Try to discuss the guardianship openly with any LSA or NSA and you will be asked to leave. Open thought on the matter is prohibited and only one point of view is sanctioned: that of the Baha'i religious hierarchy.

The sans guardian Baha'i Faith is a long way from the Faith Shoghi Effendi wrote about so gloriously in *The World Order of Baha'u'llah*. One need only read his powerful words to know that something has been lost. My purpose here is not to dissect the article written about the followers of Mason Remey point by point. I've had personal experiences with many of the people mentioned and can attest to both the reality and fiction of some of what was written. There is no doubt that the history of those who accepted Mason Remey's claim is confusing and controversial. The history of those years, however, does not negate the legitimacy of questioning the actions of the Hands in 1957. Nor does it mean one shouldn't question the sans guardian Baha'i World Faith of today. Is the Faith legitimate without a guardian at its head? Doesn't the Baha'i Faith, as it is practiced today, nullify the Master's Will and Testament? These are questions that need to be asked by every sincere Baha'i.

From a historical point of view, the years following 1960, and what happened to

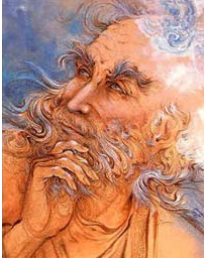
Mason's followers, are not as consequential as what happened in 1957-1960. The fact that the believers in [C. M.] Remey have splintered and divided is not nearly as important to the history of the Faith as the 1957 decision to terminate the guardianship—the sole means of preserving the Faith, laid out by 'Abdu'l-Baha in his Will and Testament. The critical question remains the guardianship and the integrity of that institution to the Revelation of Baha'u'llah. How integral is it? Those who accept the continuation of a living guardian cannot accept the legitimacy of the Baha'i Faith

without one. If someone truly wants to know what happened in 1957, they must read all that is available on the subject with a pure, open heart, as directed in the Writings, independent of what anyone says. Such effort may not impart the truth, but it is simply the best there is right now. The other alternative is to believe the party line, which leaders of the sans-guardian Baha'i Faith have laid out in a nice neat package.

For the historian, there would be only one option. I contend the same is proper for the true seeker. One can never know the answers unless the vital questions are asked.



Eram Garden, Shiraz Iran



A Ghazal from Hafis of Shiraz

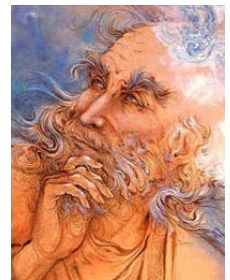
O beautiful wine-bearer, bring forth the cup and put it to my lips
Path of love seemed easy at first, what came was many hardships.
With its perfume, the morning breeze unlocks those beautiful
locks

The curl of those dark ringlets, many hearts to shreds strips.

In the house of my Beloved, how can I enjoy the feast
Since the church bells call the call that for pilgrimage equips.

With wine colour your robe, one of the old Magi's best tips
Trust in this traveller's tips, who knows of many paths and trips.
The dark midnight, fearful waves, and the tempestuous whirlpool
How can he know of our state, while ports house his unladen
ships.

I followed my own path of love, and now I am in bad repute
How can a secret remain veiled, if from every tongue it drips?
If His presence you seek, Hafiz, then why yourself eclipse?
Stick to the One you know, let go of imaginary trips.





یک غزل از حافظ

الایا ایها الساقی ادر کاسا و ناولها
که عشق آسان نمود اول ولی افتاد مشکلها
به بوی ناله‌ای کاخر صبا زان طره بگشاید
ز تاب جعد مشکینش چه خون افتاد در دلها
مرا در منزل جانان چه امن عیش چون هر دم
جرس فریاد می‌دارد که بر بندید محملها
به می سجاده رنگین کن گرت پیر مغان گوید
که سالک بی‌خبر نبود ز راه و رسم منزلها
شب تاریک و بیم موج و گردابی چنین هایل
کجا دانند حال ما سبکباران ساحلها
همه کارم ز خود کامی به بدنامی کشید آخر
نهان کی ماند آن رازی کز او سازند محفلها
حضوری گر همی‌خواهی از او غایب مشو حافظ
متی ما تلق من تهوی دع الدنیا و اهمله



ANNOUNCEMENT
TO
THE HANDS OF THE FAITH
FROM
MASON REMEY
THE SECOND GUARDIAN
OF
THE BAHA'I FAITH
OF
HIS APPOINTMENT OF GUARDIANSHIP
BY
THE FIRST GUARDIAN
OF
THE FAITH

Continues from the last issue of RIDVAN:

Washington DC,
USA, April 1960

THE ATTITUDE OF THE SECOND GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH BEFORE HIS DECLARATION

In their message to the Baha'i world following the last conclave, the Hands of the Faith announced that they would shortly hold an election to elect a Baha'i International Council, etc., which announcement was signed by twenty-two of the Hands of the Faith, but not by me, the President of this Council, appointed by the Guardian of the Faith.

Therefore, as I, as President, and other embers of this Council were appointed by the Infallible Guardian of the Faith, I refuse to relinquish my Presidency of the Council and I refuse to allow the other members of the Council to be removed from their membership of the Council. I will recognize no authority but that of infallibility; here fore I guard this institution of the International Council in fact as it is - although it now be positively inactive - until the Second Guardian of the Faith comes forth from his occultation, directing with infallibility the affairs of the Cause.

I shall hold my position as President of the International Council, as well as recognize the personnel of the Council as appointed by the Infallible Guardian of the Faith until ordered to do so by the one having the right of infallibility tells me what to do. Therefore, since the Beloved Guardian Shoghi Effendi is dead, all the affairs of the International Council must continue to remain in status quo until there be an accepted (by the Baha'i World) infallible guidance necessary to change the present status quo of the Baha'i International Council.

In thus explaining myself and my position in the Baha'i Faith, I, of myself, am making no claims whatsoever to any authority in the Cause. All that I am doing is to tell you what the station in the Cause that the Beloved Guardian bestowed upon me and at the same time placing a potential responsibility upon me that no other soul in all this world has; namely, to protect and to guard the Cause from the error of tampering with the International Council and putting to naught that which the Beloved Guardian himself created when he appointed me President of the Council-the

embryo that would eventually develop into the Bahá'í Universal House of Justice of the world.

Has the twenty-two members of the body of the Hands of the Faith not put their signatures to their published intention to put aside that which the Guardian ordained, in order that they might elect a Baha'i International Council of their own, I might have remained in silence for a time longer about this matter; but in view of thing as they are now in the Baha'i world, there is nothing for me to do but to explain this matter frankly to the believers at this time soon to be gathered in the approaching convention at Wilmette, at the same time begging them to desist from any criticism of the Hands of the Faith for having thus overstepped their province in their attempted program for 1963, for even at this late date I hope they will change.

The Hands of the Faith, without the infallible guidance and the direction of the Guardian, are not able to handle this matter. The believers in general have expected too much from the Hands of the Faith; therefore let all the friends recognize this mistake and seek to find out and to recapture the protection for the Faith that the Beloved Guardian himself arranged for, when he appointed me President of the Baha'i International Council.

PROCLAMATION

The Proclamations of the Guardians of the Faith come not from the Guardians' different individuals or personalities but are given as impersonal announcements coming from the infallible station of the Guardianship to the people of the Cause. This infallibility is fixed and is a function only of the impersonality of the Guardianship of the Faith. In other words, that which one Guardian may proclaim, there being no distinction between the infallibilities of the various pronouncements of the various Guardians who will occupy the chair of Guardianship throughout the ages to come of this Dispensation of Baha'u'llah. In other words, the import of the commands of any one of the Guardians of the Faith rests not upon the personality of that particular Guardian but upon the station of Guardianship that was vested in him as a personality while he who was an individual soul sat in the chair of the Guardianship of the Faith.

Therefore, this function of Guardianship passes on from one who thus guards the Faith to his successor. Thus there can be but one voice of Guardianship at any one time - that which any of

the Guardians may pronounce is the infallible pronouncement to be followed without question by the Hands and the believers of the Faith. As times pass and conditions in the Cause change, the orders and commands of the Guardian of the Faith change to meet and to minister to these changes, as in a battle, the orders of the commander-in-Chief are ever changing and shifting from moment to moment to out-manuever the maneuvers of the enemy. Such is also the method on shipboard in times of storm or battle. The Commander's last order is always to be obeyed first, in order to meet the ever-changing and shifting conditions of the struggle against the enemy or preservation in the storm.

The life of the Baha'i Cause is a continuous battle against attacks coming from the human world. Therefore as in battle, the last order coming from the Guardianship is to be obeyed first and is to take precedence over all former orders in order to meet the ever changing and shifting conditions that surround the Faith to be met and to be overcome, that the Faith can win the battle against the powers of the world, under the infallible guidance of the Guardian of the Faith.

I CALL A HALT ON PLANS FOR 1963

Much as I shrink from thus stepping forth thus before the Baha'i world at the convening of this convention and calling a halt of all these plans and preparations of the Hands of the Faith for instituting a House of Justice in 1963, much as I personally dislike to make this stand; nevertheless, conditions now force me to put into force the prerogatives that are mine, because of my position as President of the Baha'i International council. Therefore, I forbid the Hands of the Faith and all who support them in this their program for 1963-they should abandon this program. The very life of the Baha'i Cause depends upon my thus taking command of this situation since I, as President of the Baha'i International Council, am the only person in this entire world who has the authority and the power to protect and to guard the Faith was conferred upon me by the Beloved Guardian of the Cause by his appointment of me a President of the Baha'i International Council.

**THE PRESIDENT OF THE
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL NOW
COMMANDS THE CAUSE**

The death of the First Guardian of the Faith placed me in command of the International Council in the position of an active and functioning institution of the Baha'i Faith under the orders of the President of the Council. But all such action I deferred for some time hoping that the Hands of the Faith residing in the Holy Land would announce me as Guardian of the Baha'i world, that the Baha'i world might know and accept the authority that I hold, but no- the Hands of the Faith were caught by the spirit of violation and were confused by it.

It is therefore my duty now and at this time before these plans for 1963 proceed any further to call a halt upon all such plans and remind the people of the Faith that the Beloved Guardian placed me in command of this matter and that I have no intention of relinquishing my command of this situation.

I have the authority and the power to command this situation. It is for me to guard the institution of the International Council from any and all usurpers who would violate that which the infallible Guardian of the Faith created and then at his death, became my responsibility to carry on towards its completion.

I FORETELL THE APPEARANCE OF THE SECOND GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH

Thus do I feel constrained to share with the believers now at this time this hope that I have for you in this moment of dilemma among the believers when they don't know which way to turn to find the infallibility necessary for the direction of those of the Faith. I am thus constrained to extend this hope to you at this time, so difficult for you, lest you might even lose the hope that you should continue to hold to keep your faith until the Second Guardian of the Faith comes forth from his occultation to be received by the Cause and to lead the Baha'i Faith on its afore-promised victory.

This hope is hope that none of the other Hands of the Faith have, save I myself, of until now have they, any of them, ever suspected that I had such hope. Therefore, I take this auspicious occasion to tell the Hands of the Faith, as well as to tell you of this hope and explain to you the logic of my reason of how and why, from the Beloved Guardian's own words, and I feel so confirmed in this, my belief that the Second Guardian of the Faith is now here upon earth with us, awaiting to reveal himself to the believers of the Cause.

Thus do I share with the believers at this convention in the land of the Cradle of the

Administration, the hope that I, President of the Baha'i International Council, have had given to me and made clear to me. I as yet speak and tell you these things from the viewpoint of logic that the deductions, the process of which I here explain at length, which as you follow with me will see, is built up upon a firm foundation - this process that will give you the courage, hope and the assurance that I have that all of our Baha'i Problems of this period of interregnum will be solved and can only be solved when the Second Guardian of the Faith comes forth from his occultation to give to the Faith the infallible guidance that he alone can now give to the Baha'i world.

ANNOUNCING THE INTRODUCING THE SECOND GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH

Although Milly Collins sticks yet with and by the united group of the Hands in their decisions and pronouncements and endorses all that they are doing and trying to do toward 1963, yet Milly makes one reservation when she talks with me, saying that she believes and has faith that in the end, God will show the Hands what He wants them to do. I agree with Milly upon this, my contention, only contention with her being that in the past I was trying to put the pressure on God to hurry up the matter a bit too soon, but now this time limit is about over. The moment has arrived when, for the welfare for the Cause, there should no longer be delay. I must bring these problems to a finish, ere the Faith of the believers be overtaxed more that they can bear; therefore, I must now compel the Hands of the Faith to bow to the authority conferred upon me by our late Beloved Guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and call a halt to all these proceedings of your violation of the Baha'i Administration.

I put this matter to you very bluntly and in this very direct way, but I tell you these things with a heart full of love and compassion toward you Hands of the Faith as a body and also to each of you as individual Hands of the Faith.

You Hands of the Faith must accept me as your protector to guard you in your position as Hands of the Faith and to protect you in this exalted rank, bestowed upon each of the Hands by the Beloved Guardian. You have made a great mistake in inaugurating your program for 1963, but this may not all together be your fault, for you, like all other Baha'is, were bewildered at the death of Shoghi Effendi. It is not to be surprised at not to condemn under such extenuating circumstances as

surrounded the believers that were precipitated by the departure of the Beloved Guardian. But now, all that confusion is of the past. The way is made straight and open by my explanation to the world of the unbroken line of the Guardianship that still leads the Faith onward to the predetermined and sure victory - for such is the assurance vouchsafed to the world in this prophetic Dispensation of Baha'u'llah.

The only protection that you, as Hands of the Faith, will find will be in your support of me as your Guardian; therefore, hasten to announce this to the Baha'i world. Should you hesitate to do this you will indeed be making more trouble for yourselves. The only way you can avoid the humiliation that will be yours when the world knows of the failure of your aspiration for 1963 is now, for you to announce to the world the Second Guardian of the Faith that will bring such joy to the Baha'is in all parts, that all the mistakes of the Hands will be forgotten and the way will be assured for the triumph of the World Crusade initiated and put into action by the First Guardian of the Baha'i Faith.

I exhort you! Make haste to this!

I, MASON REMEY, GUARDIAN OF THE FAITH, ALONE COMMAND THE FAITH

Should the spirit of violation so dominate any of the Hands of the Faith to suggest to them to refuse to harken to this, my proclamation that I, Mason Remey, am now the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith, let them consider how my Guardianship of the Faith gives me the power to stand alone against any and all opposition. Therefore let all of the Hands realize this and recognize that I command the Faith and that I will brook no opposition from anyone.

Until now I, Guardian of the Faith, have remained in my occultation and because of my forbearance, have, in silence, allowed the Hands to follow their chosen path of violation. But now that hour of mercy and forbearance is at an end. The hour of justice has struck. This is the day of equity. the Hands of the Faith are the first to be called to this bar of divine justice of which the Guardian of the Faith is the judge here upon earth; therefore, let the Hands of the Faith be the first to pass, that they resting firm in the Faith may be the first to arise to serve their Second Guardian and thus be prepared to carry out his first command to them, that they immediately and without loss of time announce to

the Baha'i world through all the National Assemblies that I, Mason Remey, am their Guardian and that I have been Guardian of the Faith since the death of the Beloved Guardian, awaiting in occultation until the propitious moment to make my appearance before the Baha'i world.

THE FAITH NOT WITHOUT A GUARDIAN

I have been the Guardian of the Baha'i Faith since the death of Shoghi Effendi and single and alone until now, I have guarded it; but from now on I will expect the cooperation of the Baha'i world in the carrying on to its fulfillment the World Crusade initiated by the Beloved Guardian of the Faith, Shoghi Effendi. Until now I have stood alone with all against me. From now on I shall expect the support of the believers of the Faith.

THE INFALLIBILITY

The status of the Hands of the Faith is the same after the death of Shoghi Effendi as during his lifetime such as described in the Will and Testament of the Master 'Abdu'l-Baha. Whereas, in the case of I, myself, as the President of the

Council, during the lifetime of Shoghi Effendi I had no authority to act (that is)during his lifetime, for then he was the infallible director of all Baha'i affairs and the direction of the International Council was his and his only, for he never shared this infallible authority with anyone.

During the lifetime of the Beloved Guardian of the Faith, all infallible command of the International council was vested in him as the Guardian of the Faith. While I was President of the International Council, my command of the Council was but a potential command, since infallibility was vested only in the Guardian of the "Faith; but with the death of Shoghi Effendi my period of potential command became the actual command of the Council. So, from the death of the Beloved Guardian, I became the commander of the Bahá'í International Council and the one to direct its activities that will develop into the Universal House of Justice. This unique position amongst all Baha'is of guarding the Faith has been mine since the death of the First Guardian of the Faith.

Let all Baha'is know, realize and accept that the Beloved Guardian in his infallibility bestowed this responsibility upon me, Mason Remey.

To be continued.....



Darvazeh Koran (Entrance to Shiraz)

From Jean Miller

July 30, 1998

Dear Friends,

Since 1959, my hopes have been cantered upon the establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in Heaven. This beautiful heavenly Kingdom, where love and justice go hand in hand with forgiveness and mercy. Where following the laws of God take precedence over following the will of self. It was that blessed year that I discovered Baha'u'llah was the return of Christ and that He brought the Laws and Teachings for establishing the Kingdom of God on earth.

My parents, Frank and Virinda Norton had discovered this truth a year earlier. My father had been the Sunday School Superintendent of a Methodist Church in Webb City, Missouri. Mother assisted also by playing the piano for the services and teaching Sunday school classes. I too taught Sunday school for Kindergarten and 1st grade in this church when I was a teenager. I've always loved the teachings of Jesus.

In 1958, I lived in Wichita Kansas with my husband Ray, and two young sons, Ray Jr. and John. Mother wrote to me about the new Faith they were investigating in their study group at church. In early 1959, Ray, who worked at Boeing Aircraft, was laid off his job at the plant, and we returned to Webb City to Live with Ray's parents. In a rather dramatic way, I was convinced of the truth of the Baha'i Revelation and began an intense study of all the books that were available. The assemblies of Webb City and her sister city, Joplin, were very close and we studied together.

Of special concern was the untimely death of the first guardian, Shoghi Effendi, and the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha. The Will is very clear, the Faith must have a Guardian. Several months before Mason Remey's declaration as second guardian, I made my declaration of Faith and signed a card stating I believed in the Bab and Baha'u'llah and all they taught. Also that I believed in Abdu'l-Baha as the Center of the Covenant and accepted the Guardianship.

Both the assemblies of Webb City and Joplin were overjoyed when Mason Remey came forward and we at last knew who our Guardian was. All

accepted Mason's Guardianship but one I thought everyone in the world would accept him but alas, sad to say, that did not happen.

If the Baha'is had truly accepted the Second Guardian we would be much closer to seeing the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. The horrors we read about in the newspaper and hear broadcast by the Media would not be. The New Heaven and New Earth would be visible to all. Truth and justice, trust and loving-kindness would be found everywhere. It breaks my heart when I think of all the martyrs that have given their lives for the establishment of God's Kingdom on earth. They sacrificed so others would know truth. The knowledge that has been poured out upon earth in this dispensation is more complete than what was ever given in past ages.

I wanted to visit Mason Remey in Florence but that privilege was not granted to me. I did not have funds available at that time to make the trip. But I did write to him and always received a precious reply in return.

Mason was always close to the heart of Abdu'l-Baha. In the old Star of the West magazine, there is documentation of this fact. Anyone having the opportunity to read Mason's books written at the beginning of this century will inhale the sweetest perfume; the fragrance of a pure soul. His description of his visit to Persia and of meeting the friends there, lifts your spirits high. He tells of the great love between all the believers there. Pepe, Mason's caretaker in his later years, once wrote to me he never heard an unkind word coming from Mason and he often spent his whole day in prayer, talking to Baha'u'llah like one talks to an old friend. He always asked for forgiveness from God for those who had turned against him.

Historians will write about Mason Remey, his bravery, his love of the Faith of Baha'u'llah, his dedication to the truth of the Words of Baha'u'llah and Abdu'l-Baha, and of his application of the principles of this blessed Faith. In all of Mason's writings he encouraged the believers to "live the life", as demonstrated by the Center of the Covenant, Abdu'l-Baha.

Mason is the architect of the Archives building that houses the precious Words of Baha'u'llah, resting on the slopes of Mt. Carmel, above Haifa Israel. Abdu'l-Baha wished Mason's design for the Temple be built there also. It is little wonder that Shoghi Effendi chose Mason to be his successor by naming him Head of the embryonic Universal House of Justice. That position can only be held by the Guardian. Evidently Shoghi Effendi knew his days on earth were limited. Amazingly, Mason Remey lived to be almost 100 years old.

None of the members of Shoghi Effendi's family were found to be worthy of holding the Station of Guardianship. Mason Remey hopes that someday "the descent of the Guardianship can be brought back again into the line of descent from Baha'u'llah--All this can be attained in conformity with the Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha."

The Will and Testament of Abdu'l-Baha is a document that should be memorized, for in it is written the truth that will protect us all from spiritual harm.

Upon the death of Mason Remey, February 4th, 1974 at 8:45 PM, Donald Harvey became the 3rd Guardian. Mason Remey had appointed him to be the 3rd Guardian at his death on May 23, 1967. Shortly after Mason's death in 1974, I received a letter from Pepe reminding me of Mason's appointment of Donald Harvey as 3rd Guardian. Right away I wrote to Donald and told him I supported his Guardianship. Throughout Donald Harvey's Guardianship, I wrote to him and received beautiful spiritual replies. My husband and I were privileged to visit him three times during his Guardianship in France in 1981, 1982, and 1990.

Donald Harvey worked hard to promote the Spiritual Faith of Baha'u'llah. He wrote letters to world leaders and conducted a radio broadcast from his home in Rougemont, France. Each week Radio Centre Rougemont was on the air at the same time. The Station of the Guardianship of the Universal Faith of Baha'u'llah. He believed the Faith of Baha'u'llah was for every man, woman and child on this planet.

In the past many believers thought themselves superior for just blowing of Baha'u'llah's mission. They put themselves above His Law. His

Teachings did not matter to them for they counted themselves among the "elite". They did not see the necessity of these words; "Should other peoples and nations be unfaithful to you show your fidelity unto them, should they be unjust toward you show justice towards them, should they keep aloof from you attract them to yourself; should they show their enmity be friendly towards them, should they poison your lives, sweeten their souls, should they inflict a wound upon you, be a salve to their sores. Such are the attributes of the Sincere! Such are the attributes of the truthful. (Will and Testament...p.14)

On Saturday, November 17, 1984 AD Donald Harvey named Jacques Soghomonian to be the 4th Guardian at his death. He did not change this appointment in subsequent years and at Donald Harvey's death, October 19, 1991; Jacques Soghomonian became the 4th Guardian.

We had the pleasure of meeting Jacques in 1990 when we visited Donald Harvey in the hospital in Montbard France. His history includes membership on the French National Assembly at the time Mason Remey made his declaration as 2nd Guardian. The French National Assembly voted to accept Mason Remey's Guardianship in 1960 but were threatened with excommunication by Haifa, if they proceeded with his acceptance. Jacques Soghomonian was one of several that stood firm in his support of Mason Remey. Donald Harvey and Monir Derakhshan were two others that remained firm in their support of the Covenant.

The following words of Baha'u'llah are recorded by Shoghi Effendi in his Book, *God Passes By*. p.115. "The day of tests are now come. Oceans of dissension and tribulation are surging, and the Banners of Doubt are, in every nook and corner, occupied in stirring up mischief and in leading men to perdition... Suffer not the voice of some of the soldiers of negation to cast doubt into your midst, neither allow yourselves to become heedless of Him Who is the Truth, inasmuch as in every Dispensation such contentions have been raised. God, however, will establish his Faith, and manifest His light albeit the stirrers of sedition abhor it.

May the blessings of Baha'u'llah be ever with you
With Faith and Sincerity,
Jean Miller

In the name of God, the Lord of wisdom and utterance.
Testimonial by Brent Mathieu
4130 Plum Street
Boise, Idaho 83703
July 20, 1998

To Whom It May Concern:

This letter is a response to the document "Mason Remey and Those Who Followed Him", which shall be herein referred to as the "MRF document".

Charles Mason Remey faithfully served 'Abdu'l-Baha, and Shoghi Effendi during their ministries. 'Abdul Baha wrote Mr. Remey numerous Tablets, in copies of these which I have read, 'Abdu'l Baha addresses Mason Remey as, "O thou herald of the Covenant", "O thou star of guidance"; "O thou son of the Kingdom", and "O my dear son". According to a 1985 letter of Joseph Pepe-Remey, Shoghi Effendi gave to Mason Remey in 1922 a packet containing drops of coagulated blood and a lock of hair from Baha'u'llah. Shoghi Effendi hand wrote on the packet a note where he acknowledged that Mason Remey was 'Abdul Baha's "dear son".

Shoghi Effendi appointed Mason Remey to be the President of the International Baha'i Council; the "embryonic International Institution" which Shoghi Effendi said would evolve and effloresce into the Universal House of Justice. Shoghi Effendi also appointed Mason Remey to be a Hand of the Cause of God.

It is certain from the evidence of these actions, that both 'Abdul Baha and Shoghi Effendi highly regarded and trusted Mason Remey as steadfast in the Covenant.

It is true as the MRF document states that Mason Remey did sign the Hands' Proclamations of November 1957 attesting that Shoghi Effendi had passed away "without having appointed his successor". We understand from Mason Remey's Daily Observations, his private journal of the time in Haifa after Shoghi Effendi's funeral, that he signed these documents because he chose to be in

accord with the majority, even though his conscience was in disagreement. Also, his writings do not state that he then realized he was Shoghi Effendi's successor, that realization came later.

This is similar to when Ali, after Muhammad's passing, to outward appearances accepted the creation of the Caliphate, and the naming of Abu Bakr, even though Ali was instead the rightful successor. They both were patient, and awaited the Will of God to be known.

The proclamations by the Hands demonstrate that the Hands found no document of Shoghi Effendi, such as a will and testament, which appointed a successor, and that it was the general belief among the Hands that only a physical descendant of Baha'u'llah may be appointed. The passage in the Will and Testament of 'Abdul Baha, which states the Guardian "must choose another branch" if his first born son is not spiritually qualified to succeed him was interpreted by the Hands and the present Administration to mean only a male physical descendant may be appointed. Baha'u'llah and 'Abdu'l Baha wrote Tablets where they referred to the believers as "branches", and 'Abdu'l Baha wrote a Tablet where he said the Manifestation had explained that the descendants are of two types, one physical and one spiritual. Mason Remey was the spiritual son of 'Abdul Baha. The Hands did not consider significant Shoghi Effendi's appointment of Mason Remey as the President of the International Baha'i council.

It is extremely uncharacteristic of Shoghi Effendi's attention to detail and future plans that he died without leaving a legal document effecting the transfer of the Baha'i properties and funds to a successor, whether an individual or institution.

The Hands chose to assume the direction of the Faith after Shoghi Effendi's passing based on his recent description of them as the "Chief Stewards" Another choice available for the Faith was for the International Baha'i Council to assume leadership as it was the embryonic Universal House of Justice. The Hands apparently never seriously considered this choice. One reason may be as Ruhiiyyih Khanum wrote in her introduction to the Ministry of the Custodians, page 12:

"We had decided from the time of our first Conclave that, in order to protect the Cause of God, we would have no officers, such as President, Chairman, Secretary, etc lest one of the male Hands, holding such a position, should begin to assume in the eyes of the Baha'is the function of the leader, and, God forbid begin to be seen as a sort of second Guardian in importance"

It may be that individual Hands, especially Ruhiiyyih, did not want the IBC to be seen as the successor institution because Mason Ramey's leadership position as President then would be obvious. Since the Hands decided to destroy all notes taken during their conclaves, we may never know what the Hands motives were besides what is recorded in Mason Remy's Daily Observations. Perhaps, other Hands kept personal diaries of those days that may become public for historical research in the future

Soon after Mason Remy made his proclamation as the second Guardian, the Hands declared him to be a Covenant-breaker. Shoghi Effendi did not authorize the Hands in his life-time to determine who was a Covenant-breaker. The Hands assumed this power, despite the May 15, 1960 objection of one of the Hands, Hasan Balyuzi who wrote the Hands a letter stating "the Hands have no authority expel anyone for any other reason" than someone who opposes Shoghi Effendi by disobeying one of his definite injunctions.

It is sad and deplorable that Mason Remy died with most of his supporters having abandoned him. Jesus, the Spirit of God, suffered the same abandonment at his death. All of Chris's disciples, even Peter, denied him before his crucifixion. The faith of the believers in Christ was resurrected in three days. As Mason Remy is not a Manifestation, perhaps it takes longer for the resurrection of the faith of the believers in the Guardianship. Presently, Jacques Soghomonian as

Guardian has more active believers than Mason Remy did when he passed into the Abha Kingdom. Mason Remy did have the comfort of being well loved and cared for by Joseph Pepe Remy. Pepe arranged for Mason remaining supporters to contribute to his reburial with a monument. Diana, my wife, and I were among those who sent Pepe funds. We have a picture from Pepe of the completed burial site.

Mason Remy did give Joel Marangella in the early 1960s, probably 1961, a sealed envelope with a hand written note inside instructing Marangella to tell the Baha'i world that Mason Remy had appointed him to be his successor. Mason Remy wrote on the outside of the envelope a statement to Joel asking him to keep the envelope safe in Bern, Switzerland as Mason Remy's remarks indicate he expected it would be opened after his death in a world cataclysm. Mason Remy did appoint Marangella in 1964 to be President of the second International Baha'i Council. In 1966, Mason Ramey dissolved the second International Baha'i Council.

On May 23, 1967 Mason Remy hand wrote a letter appointing Donald Harvey to be his successor. Mason Remy publicly circulated this document among his supporters. I have a copy of this appointment document. Contrary to what is stated in the MRF document. Donald Harvey did act as the Guardian. I have several letters from him that he wrote in that respect Donald Harvey most definitely did appoint his successor to be Jacques Soghomonian. I have a copy of a 1984 hand written letter by Donald Harvey in which he appoints Jacques Soghomonian I have a copy of Donald Harvey's Will and Testament in which he appoints Jacques Soghomonian to be his successor.

I corresponded regularly with Pepe from 1975 until 1992. Pepe died in April 1994. Pepe advised several Baha'is of my acquaintance and myself to turn to Donald Harvey as the Guardian, and Mason Ramey's successor.

Joel Marangella, and his supporters- are active in promoting Marangella as the present Guardian. They are particularly active on the Internet, and have an informative website where many documents of the Baha'i Faith concerning the Guardianship and Mason Remy may be viewed and copied.

My wife and I are supporters of the Guardianship of Jacques Soghomonian. Jacques Soghomonian is a pure soul, devoted to Baha'u'llah and the welfare of humanity. May God bless him. The supporters of Jacques Soghomonian are few, and relatively inactive. I would estimate less than twenty in the United States. We do publish a newsletter with letters from Jacques Soghomonian several times a year.

May this information aid you in your search for truth and service to God's Cause

Peace,

Brent Mathieu

NOTE:

Mr. Brent Mathieu, in his letter, gave a rough estimate of number of Jacques Soghomonian's supporters that he knows in the United States. There are also some believers in continuation of the Guardianship that he does not know them.

In "Encyclopedia of American Religions", by J.Gordon Melton; Gale Research Inc, Copyright 1993, Fourth Edition the supporters of Donald Harvey were introduced under the name of "Remey Society". On page 900, we read such as:

"In 1988 the Society reported 400 members in the United States, 150 in Canada, and 200 in two European Centers in Italy and France".

Footnote by: KAMRAN TAIMOURI



Waterfalls near Shiraz, Iran

**STATEMENT
BY
E.S. YAZDANI**

26 April, 2009

I, E. S. Yazdani, currently residing at 1385 Old Northern Road, Middle Dural, 2158, Australia, state that, Mr. J. Soghomonian is the present 4th guardian of the Baha'i Faith and he remains the guardian of the Baha'i Faith until his soul is called from this physical plane to the next by the All Mighty God. He was appointed to the position of the 4th guardian of the Baha'i Faith by his predecessor; Mr. D. A. Harvey the 3rd guardian of the Baha'i Faith.

It is the duty of all the believers, including his appointed successor, to obey and support him in accordance with the provision of the Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha.

It must be stated that it is my great honour to serve the present guardian of the Faith. It is my dignity to obey his order. It is my adoration and adulation to take his direction. I am nothing in his presence. My greatness is to be humble before him. My God protect him and I wish him a very long life in this world.

May God assist me to remain faithful in His Covenant.

May God protect the Cause of Baha'u'llah from the violators of His Covenant.

E.S. Yazdani
Sydney, Australia
26 April, 2009

PS: This statement was published in the last April issue of RIDVAN and it is republished again to stress that the unity of the Faith is guarded by obeying the present Guardian of the Faith his eminence Mr. J. Soghomonian. He is the present Guardian of the Faith. It should be understood by all that E.S. Yazdani remains faithful to the present Guardian of the Faith Mr. J. Soghomonian. He is our Guardian and he remains the Guardian of the Faith. Signed by E.S. Yazdani

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Cyrus the Great Charter of Human Rights

I am Cyrus. King of the world. When I entered Babylon... I did not allow anyone to terrorize the land... I kept in view the needs of people and all its sanctuaries to promote their well-being... I put an end to their misfortune. The Great God has delivered all the lands into my hand; the lands that I have made to dwell in a peaceful habitation.... .When my soldiers in great numbers peacefully entered Babylon... I did not allow anyone to terrorize the people... I kept in view the needs of people and all its sanctuaries to promote their well-being... Freed all the slaves... I put an end to their misfortune and slavery (referring to religious minorities). The Great God has delivered all the lands into my hand; the lands that I have made to dwell in a peaceful habitation... “

مومنین بحضرت بهاءالله کلا ملاحظه فرمائید

بیانیہ توسط عنایت اللہ یزدانی

بعد از صعود شوقی افندی اولین ولی امر دیانت بها ۱۹۵۷ میلادی اعضای موسسه ایادی امرالله برهبری روحیه خانم علم مخالفت بر علیه آقای چالزمیسن ریمی رئیس جنین بیت العدل اعظم الہی یعنی وصی منتصب شوقی افندی و دومین ولی امر دیانت بهایی برافراشتند. وبا برنامه حساب شده ای ایشان را از میدان بدرکردند و طبق نوشته شیخ ص روحیه خانم بدون هیچ مجوزی و سندی برکرسی شوقی افندی تکیه زدند و برای خود اختیاراتی قائل شدند . برای فریب دادن عموم در سال ۱۹۶۳ میلادی اقدام بتشکیل مؤسسه ای بنام بیت العدل اعظم الہی کردند . این مؤسسه طبق دستورات و آثار نظم اداری دیانت بهایی تشکیل نشده است . این مؤسسه باید رئیس داشته باشد . باید ولی امرالله رئیس لاینعزل این مؤسسه باشد . باید نگمطی شده جنین بیت العدل اعظم الہی که شوقی افندی در سال ۱۹۵۱ میلادی تشکیل داده بودند باشد و چون چنین نیست و مطابق دستورات الہی تشکیل نشده است پس بیت العدل اعظم الہی نبوده و نیست. از این رو فاقد هرگونه صلاحیت است.

در تائید این مطلب شوقی افندی در توقیع تموز ۱۹۲۵ میلادی در ارتباط با تشکیل جنین بیت العدل کاذبی توسط دشمنان داخلی دیانت بهائی ورد آن از طرف ایشان میفرمایند:

هر هیاتی که به نظام الہی و بر حسب تعلیمات و اصول و شرایط سماویہ کہ در صحف الہیہ مشروحا مثبت و مسطور است کا ملا کما ینبغی ویلیق لهذا المقام الرفیع ولمرکز المنیع انتخاب و تشکیل نشود ان هیات از اعتبار اصلی و رتبہ روحانی ساقط و از حق تشریع و وضع احکام و سنن و قوانین غیر منصوصہ ممنوع و از شرف اسنی و قوه مطلقہ علیا محروم. [اشاره به بیت العدل اعظم الہی کہ تنها هیات قانون گذار بین المللی است]

Guardian of the Baha'i Faith in Person

Permanent Head of the Universal House of Justice

شخص ولی امر دیا نت بهایی رئیس لا ینعزل بیت العدل اعظم الہی

“Without such an institution [Guardianship] the integrity of the Faith would be imperilled, and the stability of the entire fabric would be gravely endangered. Its prestige would be suffered, the means required to enable it to take a long, an uninterrupted view over a series of generations would be completely lacking, and the necessary guidance to define the sphere of the legislative action of its elected representative would be totally withdrawn.”

From Dispensation of Baha'u'llah by Shoghi Effendi

”بدون این موسسه [ولایت امر الله] وحدت امر الله در خطرافتد و بنیا نش متزلزل گردد و از منزلتش بکاهد و از واسطه فیضی که بر عواقب امور در طی دهور احاطه دارد با لمره بی نصیب ماند و هدایتی که جهت تعیین حدود و وظائف تقنینیه منتخبین ضروری است از آن سلب گردد“
از توفیق دور بهایی نوشته شوقی افندی

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE

بیت العدل اعظم الہی

Universally Elected Body by the People of the World

[Under direct supervision of living Guardian of the Baha'i Faith]

مجمع انتخابی بین المللی توسط ساکنین کره ارض

[زیر نظر مستقیم شخص ولی امر دیا نت بهایی]

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