

The Báb's Epistle from Chihríq Addressed to Áqá Mírzá Ḥasan-ʿAlí, His Younger Maternal Uncle

Mohammad Norozi¹

12 August 2025

Introduction and background:

This sacred Epistle is preserved in *Ma'khadh-i Ash'ār dar Āthār-i Bahā'ī*, volume 4, pages 73–74, compiled by the esteemed scholar Vahid Rafati. According to his research, it was most likely revealed in the fortress of Chihríq on the first day of Dhū'l-Qa'dih 1265 A.H. (corresponding to October 18, 1849), and was addressed to Áqá Mírzá Ḥasan-ʿAlí, the Báb's younger maternal uncle, then residing in Yazd. Rafati offers no further clarification regarding the evidentiary basis for this precise dating, nor does he specify any additional sources consulted in reaching this conclusion.

Yet, within the text itself, the Báb alludes to a letter dispatched to His dearly-beloved mother and grandmother on the twenty-eighth day of Sha'bān. The original of that missive²—still extant and precisely dated to 1265 A.H. (1849 C.E.)—establishes with certainty that this Epistle to His younger uncle was likewise revealed in that same year, during His incarceration in the mountain fastness of Chihríq.

What follows is a provisional English rendering of this luminous Epistle, translated with the utmost reverence and care.

¹ Contact email address: nsm_dist@hotmail.com.

² The letter of the Báb addressed to His mother and grandmother, dated 28th of Sha'bān 1265 A.H. (1849 C.E.), is accessible at: [Letter of the Báb to His Beloved Mother](#).

The Báb reveals;

“He is God, the Most Exalted, the Most Great, the Most High, the Most Glorious

At the moment of writing, it is the first day of Dhū al-Qa‘dah. Praise be to God, as befitteth His glory. And may His blessings rest upon Muḥammad, His kindred, and His followers, according to His grace and bounty. Verily, He is the All-Bountiful, the Bestower.

In the past months, a repeated mention — a manifest token of life — has been made; praise be to God, now as heretofore.

Since it is in the pleasure of the Beloved, though amidst the mountain, it is yet a source of joy. What right have I to question or find fault with the deeds of the Sovereign, the All-Compelling; the Ruler, the Supreme Ordainer, the All-Subduing?

Had I not been content with this place, how else could these bewildered peoples have been tested? And how else could the truth of the words of Bāqir — may My soul be a sacrifice to Him Who is in the Knowledge of God — have been made manifest?

Where it hath been stated, as is mentioned in the Ghaybat al-Numani: ‘Ere long shall a Fire be kindled in Ádhirbáyján, before which naught whatsoever shall prevail, and so forth.’³

I have no recourse but to entrust My affair unto God and beseech Him for deliverance. For He is the All-Seeing of His servants.

³ The statement attributed to Bāqir, of which a passage is cited in this sacred Epistle, refers to a tradition of Imám Muḥammad al-Bāqir—the fifth Imám of the Shí‘ah and son of Imám Zayn al-‘Ābidín—which Muḥammad ibn Ibrāhīm al-Nu‘mānī, known as Ibn Abī Zaynab, has recorded in his *Kitāb al-Ghaybah al-Nu‘mānī* as follows: “*Ere long shall a Fire be kindled in Ádhirbáyján, before which naught whatsoever shall prevail. When that time cometh, then be ye guardians of your homes, and depart whence ye have departed. And when Our moving one moveth, hasten unto him, even if ye crawl. By God, I seem to behold him between the Rukn and the Maqām, He who shall pledge allegiance to the people with a new Book, a mighty one against the Arabs. He said: “Woe unto the Arabs from an evil that draweth nigh.”* (Vahid Rafati, *Ma‘khadh-i Ash‘ār dar Āthār-i Bahā’ī*, vol. 4, p. 75).

The terms *Rukn* (الركن) and *Maqām* (المقام) refer respectively to the Corner Stone (Rukn al-Yamani) and the Station of Abraham (Maqām Ibrahim), both integral elements of the Islamic sacred precinct surrounding the Ka‘bah in Mecca. These sites hold deep spiritual and historical significance in Islamic tradition, representing the physical and metaphysical connection between the Prophet Abraham’s legacy and the holiest sanctuary in Islam. The use of these terms untranslated preserves their sanctity and specific religious connotations, in keeping with the elevated style of Shoghi Effendi’s authoritative English renderings of Bahá’í scripture, which often retain key Islamic concepts to maintain their spiritual resonance and contextual depth. (Cf. *God Passes By*, pp. 15–16; *The Dawn-Breakers*, p. 232).

Although, this day, I find no one who is sorrowful like unto Myself. Yet because it is in the way of God, there is perfect contentment and joy. The ordinance of God hath passed before, and thou shalt find no alteration in the ordinance of God. ⁴

Numerous petitions have been written to the presence of grandmother and mother, to comfort their hearts in every circumstance. If they so desire, to remain in Yazd is by far better than Shiraz; otherwise, they are at liberty to choose.

A petition, dated the twenty-eighth day of the Glorious Month of Sha‘bān,⁵ was laid before them; and, God willing, it hath arrived, and may they have no cause whatsoever for anxiety. Praise be to God, all is well. And at all times beseech the Lord to bring to pass whatsoever is good.

Though it is evident that they are in the utmost sorrow, yet by the remembrance of Joseph and the Presence of the Imām Mūsá,⁶ their hearts find consolation.

Let the contents of this very page be read in their presence, that perchance their hearts may find solace. These days no new tidings have arrived from the sources of the decree;⁷ until thereafter the divine decree of His Most Holy Presence, the Bestower of Bounties, shall be fulfilled.

Recently, the letters dated the eighth of Jamádí al-Thání⁸ were perused. This very page, after due consideration, was dispatched to Shiraz, that it may be perused. A reply to the letters has been written, which shall be sent and will surely arrive.

A fresh copy of Jinán al-Khulúd⁹ has been seen; it hath been commissioned and shall be delivered unto all present. One is likewise the portion of the mother, which apparently should be delivered to the household; full discretion is theirs.

As previously mentioned, let the minor disputes concerning Sayyid ‘Alí Muhammad¹⁰ be put to an end, and whatever is wished for, let it be delivered.

⁴ Qur’án 23:48.

⁵ The twenty-eighth day of the month of Sha‘bān in the year 1265 A.H. corresponds to 19 July 1849 C.E.

⁶ By “Joseph” is meant the Prophet of the Children of Israel, the seventh son of Jacob, whose life and trials are recounted in both the Torah and the Surah of Joseph in the Holy Qur’án. “His Holiness Imām Mūsá” refers to Imām Mūsá al-Kāẓim, the Seventh Imām of the Shi’ahs, who was poisoned and martyred in 183 A.H. (799 A.D.) by order of Hārūn al-Rashīd, the Abbasid Caliph, during his imprisonment in Baghdad.

⁷ The phrase “no new tidings have arrived from the sources of the decree” is an allusion to the sovereign—Muḥammad Sháh Qājār—and/or his Prime Minister, Ḥájí Mírzá Áqásí, signifying that no fresh edict or directive had been issued regarding the Báb.

⁸ The eighth day of Jamádí al-Thání in the year 1265 A.H. corresponds to 1 May 1849 C.E.

⁹ By *Jinán al-Khulúd* is meant a book authored in Persian by Mírzá Muḥammad Riḍā ibn Muḥammad Mu‘min Imāmī, a teacher from Khātūnābādī, composed during the years 1127 A.H. (1715–1713 A.D.), in the era of Sultan Ḥusayn Ṣafavī. This book includes, among other topics, explanations of the Divine Names, the history of religions, the annals of kings and sovereigns, and the history of the Pure Imams. This work has been published multiple times; its first edition, printed lithographically without page numbers, bears the date Monday, 18th of Rabi‘ al-Awwal, 1263 A.H. (6 March 1847). (Vahid Rafati, *Ma’khadh-i Ash‘ār dar Áthār-i Bahā’ī*, vol. 4, p. 76)

¹⁰ The phrase سید دویست و دو (“Sayyid Two Hundred and Two”) is a symbolic appellation rooted in the classical Arabic Abjad numeral system, wherein each letter of the alphabet is assigned a specific numerical value. When the letters of the name علی محمد (“Alí Muhammad”), the sacred name of the Báb, are totalled according to this system, their sum is

Also, settle the account of Bombáy, likewise pay the past dues. And the price of eighty units¹¹ be paid, so that the account may be settled. With these two individuals do I bring this page to a close. And peace.

*You are the offspring of the bough,
Counting the joys of cypress and rose;
The hunter holds a solemn pact with me,
And I am caught within the twisting snare.¹²*

May the true greeting be upon those dear ones of Yazd whose salutations you kindly spoke.

Let it be conveyed unto the Presence of Shaykh Muḥammad Ḥusayn: I am thy guarantor of Paradise by virtue of friendship for one such as thee, whenever thou shalt discharge the debt of thine elder brother. If thou willest, bestow; and know thou on the morrow that the keys of Paradise and of Hell are all in My hand, even as is My signet; and sufficient is God as a witness.”

exactly 202. Thus, سید دوست و دو serves as a mystical numerical epithet for the Báb, signifying His exalted station and identity in coded form. This method of numerical symbolism has a long-standing tradition in Islamic and Bahá'í esoteric literature, employed to express reverence and to conceal profound spiritual meanings within sacred names.

¹¹ The phrase 'قیمت له دانه' refers to the price corresponding to eighty units (دانه), where the term 'له' functions as a numerical cipher denoting the number eighty in the Abjad or accounting system. The specific nature of the units is not explicitly stated in the text.

¹² These verses are by Vahshi Bāfqī (وحشی بافقی; 1532–1583 C. E.), a distinguished Persian poet of the Safavid period, born in Bāfq near Yazd. Celebrated for his mastery of the *ghazal* and *masnavī* forms, his poetry is noted for its lyrical intensity, vivid imagery, and poignant evocation of love and longing. His unfinished romantic *masnavī*, *Farhād u Shīrīn*, later completed by other poets, remains among his most celebrated works.

The Báb's Epistle from Chihríq Addressed to Áqá Mírzá Ḥasan- 'Alí, His Younger Maternal Uncle- Transcribed from a Typed Copy

هو الله المتكبر الاكبر العلى الاعلى

حال تحرير غرة ذي القعدة است الحمد لله كما هو مستحقه و صلى الله على محمد و آله و شيعته كما هو عليه من الفضل و الجود انه هو الجواد الوهاب در شهور ماضيه مكرر ذكرى كه مشعر بر حيات بود شده الله الحمد الآن كماكان چون در رضای محبوب است اگرچه در جبل است ولى خوش است مرا چه حد است كه در فعل ملك قهار و سلطان مدبر جبار لم و بم گويم هرگاه راضى به اين محل نميشدم اين خلق مد هوش از چه راه ممتحن ميشدند و صدق كلام باقر روحى و من هو في علم الله فداه از چه راه ظاهر ميشد حيث قال بما هو مذكور في غيبة النعماني لايد لنار من آذربيجان لايقوم لها شيء الخ. بلى ليس لي سبيل الا ان افوض امري الى الله و اسئل الفرج من عنده انه بصير بعباده اگرچه محزونی امروز مثل خود گمان ندارم ولى چون در سبيل الله هست كمال رضا و فرح است سنة الله قد خلت من قبل و لن تجد لسنة الله تحويلا. عرايض متعددة به حضور جده و والده نوشته شده تسلى خاطر ايشان را در هر حال فرموده هرگاه ميل دارند توقف يزد به مراتب بهتر از شيراز است ديگر مختارند عريضة بيست و هشتم شهر شعبان المعظم به حضور ايشان معروض داشته ان شاء الله رسیده مطلق اضطرابى نداشته باشند. بحمدالله خوش مى گذرد و در هر حال از خداوند مسئلت فرمايند كه آنچه خير است جارى فرمايد اگرچه بديهى است در كمال حزن هستند ولى به ذكر يوسف و حضرت امام موسى خاطر را تسلى دهند مضمون همين صفحه را در محضر ايشان خوانده تسلى خاطرى بهم رسد اين ايام خبر تازه از مبادى حكم نرسیده تا بعد تقدير حضرت و اهب العطايا چه جارى گردد تازگى خطوط الى مورخة هشتم جمادى الثانى را مشاهده نموده همين صفحه را بعد از ملاحظه روانه

شيراز نموده كه ملاحظه فرمايند جواب خطوط نوشتم بفرستد خواهد رسيد نسخة جنات الخلودى تازه ديده شد سفارش شده حضور همگى خواهد رسيد يكي هم سهم والده است گويا به طرف خانه بدهند مختارند قبل اشاره شد خورده تفرقات سيد دويست و دو را قطع نمايند و آنچه بخواهند برسانيد محاسبة بامبائى را هم بگزرانيد كذلك ماض و قيمت له دانه را بدهند تا حساب بگذرد به اين دو فرد ختم مينمايم صفحه را والسلام

شما كازادگان شاخساريد

نشاط سرو و گل فرصت شماريد

كه صياد مرا با من قرارى است

مرا هم با شكنج دام كارى است

ذكر دوستان يزد كه سلام ذكر نموده بوديد سلام حق بر ايشان باد به جناب شيخ محمد حسين را گفته ضامنم جنت را از براى مثل تو دوستى هرگاه دين برادر اكبرت را ادا كنى ان شئت فاعطوالاستعلم غدا بان مفاتيح الجنة و النار كلها فى يدى كخاتمي و كفى بالله على شهيداً