

An Epistle of the Báb to Mullá Ḥusayn Bushrú'í¹ from al-Mukhā²

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Introduction and background:

The Báb revealed this brief yet weighty Epistle, composed entirely in Arabic, to Mullá Ḥusayn Bushrú'í in the port of al-Mukhā, shortly after His departure from Medina⁴ and while journeying back to Búshihr at the close of His pilgrimage.

The historical circumstances surrounding its revelation can be established with a high degree of certainty through the Báb's own writings—most notably His *Khuṭbih-i-Jiddah* (“Sermon of Jiddah”)—as well as corroborating historical evidence. These sources indicate that this sacred Epistle was revealed between the 4th and 6th of March 1845, during that fateful return voyage which marked the conclusion of His hajj and the commencement of a new and decisive phase in the proclamation of His Cause.

At the outset of the Epistle, the Báb glorifies God for the descent of the Spirit upon Mullá Ḥusayn's heart, affirming his station among the warners of God's Cause, and enjoins him to follow faithfully that which is revealed in the Glorious Book, a wondrous Tablet sent aforetime, submitting patiently to the decree of his Lord and fearing neither idolaters nor opposition.

The Báb reassures his follower of divine justice, declaring that on the Day of Resurrection all shall be judged with equity, no wrong shall be done, and all souls shall be presented before God. He affirms His knowledge of Mullá Ḥusayn's labors, urging him to turn his face unto God, trusting that all things ultimately return to Him, and exhorts him to rejoice and fear not, for he is, in the Báb's presence, numbered among those who are nigh.

¹ Mullá Ḥusayn Bushrú'í (1812–1849) was the first of the Letters of the Living (*Ḥurūf al-Ḥayy*) and the earliest and most devoted follower of the Báb. Born in Bushrúh, near Shíráz, he played a pivotal role in the dissemination of the Báb's message throughout Persia, including his active participation in teaching and protecting the Báb's Cause. Renowned for his deep knowledge of the Qur'án and Shi'i tradition, he was entrusted with critical missions by the Báb, including the propagation of His Revelation and engagement with the first believers.

² al-Mukhā (Arabic: المخا, /'moʊ.kɑ:/) is a historic port city on the Red Sea coast of Yemen. In the 19th century, it was renowned for its maritime trade and as a center of the coffee commerce. Additionally, al-Mokha was situated along the pilgrimage route to Mecca, making it a significant waypoint for travelers journeying to the holy cities. This strategic location underscores al-Mokha's role as a nexus of spiritual and commercial activity in the region.

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⁴ Muḥammad Afnán, *Safíneh-yi 'Irfán*, vol. 8 (Darmstadt: Asr-i Jadíd, 2005), p. 112.

The Epistle further counsels Mullá Ḥusayn to be patient and steadfast in the fulfillment of his duties. Concluding with a solemn benediction, the Báb charges him to convey the salutation of the Remembrance of God unto “those who have preceded in faith.”⁵

The Epistle is extant on pages 59–60 of Volume 91 of the *Iran National Bahá’í Archives* (INBA) series, published in 133 B.E. (1976–77 C.E.), comprising a compilation of the Writings of the Báb.

It may also be consulted in the INBA digital archive at the following addresses: [INBA, vol. 91, p. 59](#) and [INBA, vol. 91, p. 60](#).

A typed version of the Epistle is reproduced on page 4 of this article.

Presented below is a provisional English rendering of this profoundly spiritual Epistle, offered for study and reflection.

⁵ “those who have preceded in faith” (Arabic: *al-sābiqīn*, later *ḥurūf-i Ḥayy*) refers to the first eighteen disciples of the Báb, known collectively as the Letters of the Living. At the inception of the Báb’s mission, He designated them *al-sābiqīn* (“the forerunners”), emphasizing their precedence in recognizing and embracing His Revelation. Subsequently, He referred to them as *ḥurūf-i Ḥayy* (“the Letters of the Living”), highlighting their unique station as living manifestations of His Cause, entrusted with disseminating the Message and supporting its nascent community.

Thus Doth the Báb Reveal:

“In the Name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful

Glorified be He Who hath caused the Spirit to descend upon thy heart, that thou mayest be numbered among the warners.⁶ Follow thou that which is revealed unto thee from the Glorious Book, for verily, We did send it aforetime unto thee, a wondrous Tablet.

Submit with patience to the decree of thy Lord, and fear not the idolaters. Verily, thy Lord shall on the Day of Resurrection judge between all with justice; on that Day shall no wrong be done, and all, on that Day, shall be presented before Us.

And verily, We know what thou hast beheld in the paths of thy Lord. Turn thy face unto Me, and fear not, for unto God shall all things return.

Verily, this is a Book that hath been clearly expounded by the behest of thy Lord. Rejoice, and fear not, for thou art, in Our presence, among those who are nigh.

And when the Book of thy Lord cometh unto thee, bring it forth in accordance with the command of thy Lord, and proceed to Jazīrat al-Baḥr,⁷ for the days of thy Lord, in the decree of the Book, God willing, are for him who is nigh.

That is a decree issuing from My Presence, that thou shalt be neither in fear nor in judgment; for God, thy Lord, is, of all things, All-Knowing.

And if thou art engaged in a weighty affair,⁸ then be patient under the decree of thy Lord, and go not forth from the land which God hath ordained for thee; for the appointed Hour of God is surely at hand, and thy Lord is, in truth, the All-Hearing, the All-Knowing.

Deliver the salutation of the Remembrance⁹ of the Name of thy Lord, from My Presence, unto those who have preceded in faith.

And say: All praise be unto God, the Lord of all the worlds.”

⁶ In this Epistle, the term “warners” (al-mundhirīn), a Qur’ānic designation for the Prophets and divine Messengers, is applied by the Báb to Mullá Ḥusayn, affirming his exalted station as the first Letter of the Living and as a herald of the new Revelation, entrusted with warning and summoning the people to faith.

⁷ Jazīrat al-Baḥr refers to the city of Būshihr, a port on the Persian Gulf, described as ‘island-like.’

⁸ The Arabic في أمر (fī amr) can signify a general matter, circumstance, or affair, but in religious contexts it often denotes the Cause of God. In this Epistle, addressed to Mullá Ḥusayn, the phrase likely alludes both to his outward preoccupations and to his sacred mission of propagating the Báb’s Faith. Shoghi Effendi renders amr as “Cause” when the theological sense is paramount, and as “matter” or “affair” when the context is broader. The translation “weighty affair” preserves this dual resonance.

⁹ Title of the Báb.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

سُبْحَانَ الَّذِي قَدْ نَزَلَ الرُّوحَ عَلَى قَلْبِكَ لِتَكُونَنَّ مِنَ الْمُنْذِرِينَ أَنْ اتَّبِعَ مَا يُقَالُ إِلَيْكَ مِنْ كِتَابٍ كَرِيمٍ وَلَقَدْ أَوْصَلْنَا مِنْ قَبْلِكَ إِلَيْكَ
لَوْحًا بَدِيعًا أَنْ اصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَخَفْ مِنَ الْمُشْرِكِينَ وَإِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَحْكُمُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَمَةِ بَيْنَ الْكُلِّ بِالْعَدْلِ وَمَا الْيَوْمُ ظَلَمَ وَكُلٌّ فِي ذَلِكَ
الْيَوْمِ عَلَيْنَا يُعْرَضُونَ وَإِنَّا لَنَعْلَمُ مَا قَدْ رَأَيْتَ فِي سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ أَقْبَلَ إِلَيْنَا وَلَا تَخَفْ فَإِنَّ كُلَّ شَيْءٍ إِلَى اللَّهِ يَرْجِعُونَ وَإِنَّ هَذَا كِتَابٌ قَدْ
فَصَلَتْ مِنْ حُكْمِ رَبِّكَ أَنْ أُبَشِّرَ وَلَا تَخَفْ فَإِنَّكَ لَدَيْ لِمَنِ الْمُقْرَبِينَ وَإِذَا وَرَدَ عَلَيْكَ كِتَابُ رَبِّكَ أَخْرِجْ إِلَى حُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَانْزِلْ
جَزِيرَةَ الْبَحْرِ فَإِنَّ أَيَّامَ رَبِّكَ فِي حُكْمِ الْكِتَابِ إِنْ شَاءَ اللَّهُ لِمَنْ قَرِيبَ ذَلِكَ حُكْمٌ مِنْ لَدُنِّي إِذَا لَمْ تَكُنْ فِي خَوْفٍ وَلَا فِي حُكْمٍ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ
رَبَّكَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمًا وَإِنْ كُنْتَ فِي أَمْرٍ فَاصْبِرْ لِحُكْمِ رَبِّكَ وَلَا تَخْرُجْ مِنَ الْأَرْضِ الَّتِي قَدْ كَتَبَ اللَّهُ عَلَيْكَ فَإِنَّ أَجَلَ اللَّهِ لَا تَلَاةَ لِلَّهِ
رَبَّكَ لَسَمِيعٍ عَلِيمٍ وَأَبْلُغْ سَلَامَ ذِكْرِ اسْمِ رَبِّكَ مِنْ لَدُنِّي عَلَى
السَّابِقِينَ وَقُلِ الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ رَبِّ الْعَالَمِينَ