

Bahai Nest

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Mount Carmel Haifa, Syria

February 22d 1914

Dear friends!

"Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you,
and persecute you and shall say all manner of evil against
you falsely for my sake. Rejoice and be exceedingly glad:
for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they
the prophets which were before you."

If the above utterance of Our Lord Jesus Christ
is one of the unmistakable signs of the followers of Truth, then
the Bahais can lay a special claim on the great significance
of this verse and apply it with a greater force and truth-
fulness to the founders of this Movement and those
who embraced their doctrines. For they were not only
reviled or persecuted or calumniated but they were thrown
into dark jails, exiled, tortured, and martyred by
hundreds and thousands. The ^{contents of the} following talk by our
Beloved Abdul Baha will disclose one of the
smallest chapters of Bahai sufferings and tests.

The friends in Boshruyah are very old. They have suffered
 all manner of persecutions, many of them were martyred,
 yet they remained firm and steadfast and their faith
 increased. From the day that His Honor Bah-El-Bah
 accepted this Truth Boshruyah became a spiritual
 Fort of Bahai victories. The children of the very first
 believers are living today and are most happy ^{on account}
 of their divine heritage. They were some of the oldest
 believers. Persecutions and sufferings were heaped upon
 their heads; trials and ordeals were their daily sus-
 tenance. A large number of them were martyred
 in the Fortress of Tabarassi. Most of them lived at
 all time under the threats of the ignorant mob
 and the outlawry of the unruly rabble. Their
 hardships and tribulations in the Fortress of
 Tabarassi were indescribable and heart-harrow-
 ing. For 18 days they had nothing to eat. The
 enemies had surrounded them from all sides
 and communication with ^{the} outside world was
 completely debarred. They could not go out and

buy any provision. For days they ate the bark of the trees, the grass and the leather of the horse's saddles. While surrounded on all parts by these unbearable hardships, the countenance of their faith remained undimmed and their firmness and steadfastness unshaken. It is most difficult ^{for} that a person ^{to} may remain firm at the time of test. When Christ was speaking to his disciples about his approaching death and the scattering of the sheep Peter said unto him, 'although ^{all} shall be offended, yet will not I.' Then the Master intimated that he ^{would} ~~shall~~ not remain firm, saying: 'That this day, even in this night, before the cock crew twice thou shalt deny me thrice!' but Peter 'spoke the more vehemently, if I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise. Likewise also said they all.' But when they were put under the refining process of the examination we find that their assertions did not agree with their actions. The hour of test is the hour which will settle

for all time to come who is firm in the Cause of God
 and who decamps the field of action. In every
 dispensation a number of sanctified souls have become
 manifest who were self-sacrificing, severed from
 ought else save God, forebearing sufferings and
 tribulations, accepting hardships and persecutions,
 welcoming tortures and deaths for the sake of
 Truth; but in none of the past dispensations
 there have ^{there} been such heroic and sublime
 instances of devotion and martyrdoms as in this
 Bahai Cause! At the time when all the inhabitants
 of Teheran had arisen against this Cause and
 the Blessed ^{Baha} Perfection was arrested and thrown
 into a prison I was a very young child. The
 jail wherein Baha-Allah was imprisoned was a
 dark and gloomy cell, underground, and had
 no aperture, and no window save a small door.
 When the door was unlocked one had to descend
 many rickety steps before reaching the gloomy,
 stuffy and humid ground floor.

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The name of the gaoler was Aga Bozork and he was
an inhabitant from the city of Gazvin. As in the
past he had received many favors, boventies, gifts and
kindnesses from the ^{the} blessed hands of Baha-Allah he
came one day to our house and took me with him to
see my Father. Descending half the stairs of the
cell I tried to peer ^{to try} through the darkness, ~~whether~~ I
^{and} can see ^{someone} anyone. I could see no one. Everything was
pitched ~~darkness~~ darkness. Suddenly I heard, the wonder-
ful, resonant voice of ^{Baha Allah} the Blessed Perfection: 'Take
out this child. Do not let him come in.' Obeying
the words of Baha-o-Allah the gaoler took me out
and said: 'Sit ^{down} here and be patient. About noon
the prisoners are taken out and then you can
see your father.' I did. A little after 12
o'clock they brought ^{the prisoners and} them out, amongst ^{them} whom
I saw the ^{Baha Allah} Blessed Perfection. A thick, heavy
chain called 'Gare' Kahar', the heaviest and the
thickest chain of the time, was placed around
his ~~body~~ feet, the end of which ~~was~~ dropped

along the ground. His neck was also chained with
 heavy fetters and his hands manacled. Mirza
 Mahmoud - a most wonderful Bahai - was the
 fellow-prisoner of Baha-Allah. They were chained
 together. A common, ordinary felt hat, the top
 of which ~~had been~~ ^{was} worn out and the fringe
 of which torn and soiled, was on his ~~head~~
 head. I cannot describe to you the pain and
 anguish that attacked and ~~tortured~~ me by
 this sight of the ~~Manifestation~~ ^{my father}! ./. . . .
 X ~~In short~~. The ~~friendship~~ ^{the} cruelties of ^{Persia} authorities of
 reached to such a height as to divide a large
 number of the believers amongst the various
 classes of the inhabitants of Teheran, so that
^{these people} they might martyr them according to their ^{own}
 devilish desires. For example, a believer was
 given to the government clerks, another to
 the policemen, another to the infantry, ^{another}
 to the Ulama, another to the Dervishes, ^{another}
 to the butchers - one to the members of

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each craft and profession - so that all of them ^{might} ~~may~~ lend a hand in shedding the blood of these innocent Babis. For instance, a believing was given to the cavalry. These ferocious beasts took him to Salze Meydan and about one thousand of them riding on their horses, with drawn swords attacked him from all sides. The body was actually cut into ^a thousand small pieces and ^{yet} they did not gave it up. The sight of blood had maddened them, and turning them into wild, dancing savages, thirsting for more blood. Finally the executioner cried out to them 'O ye mad men! Stop! It is enough! Nothing is left of the body. I must take these small shreds ^{of the flesh} and ~~pieces~~ and bury them! Do not add ^{more} to ^{the} horror of my task! At this juncture a restaurant Keeper arrived on the scene and asked the executioner to let him have the remains of the 'accursed Babi', because he would burn them in his stove and by this act gain his entrance

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into Paradise These were days of miraculous
deeds, matchless heroism, unsurpassable firmness,
and divine courage. Each one of the believers while
walking upon earth, ^{was} ~~were~~ at the same time, soaring
toward the Supreme Concurrence. They were the angels
of the Kingdom of Abha and the spiritual heroes
of the arena of unparalleled sacrifice." X

While the Master was entertaining many
people all day long I was busy translating in
my room. When I saw him this evening he
said: "I have been talking all day and now I feel
tired. I am obliged to speak. Often I am unable
to speak one word but I must talk for more
than one hour. People coming to me do not expect to
go away disappointed and so I must satisfy the
need of every one. I have been working and speaking
all day, now speaking with a Jew, then with a Moh-
amadan, now with a Turk, anon with an Arab."

Then we had a large meeting in which the
Beloved gave the above spiritual talk which
made us all weep. He himself was moved to tears.
In this determined spirit, he expects to see our American
and European brothers and sisters working for the
Cause and spreading the Teachings of Baha-Allah.
The foundation of this Revelation is laid on such
adamantine rock of sacrifice. We are not fortunate
and worthy to demonstrate our faith like unto these
martyrs but we can at least catch their enthusiasm
and staunch faithfulness in the diffusion of the
Fragrances of God.