

Home of Abdul Baha
Mount Carmel, Haifa Syria
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Dear friends!

In the Tablet just translated we find the name of Khaleel who lived ^{at the time} in Haifa with his brother and mother. His two sons are now living in Acca and Jaffa and are good Bahais. Of the father the Master said: "His life was an example of honesty and activity. He was a flame of the love of God and a true lover of humanity. By a profession he was a coppersmith and often worked till midnight in order to make enough money to support the poor believers. While he worked he chanted the poems and Tablets of the Blessed Perfection and wept in such a heart-moving manner that all those who heard him were stirred. Although he was not well off yet he was open-handed and generous, the door of his home was open ^{always} and friends and strangers received a cheering welcome. His simple but hearty feasts are ever remembered. Occasionally he indulged in poetry and when the news of the martyrdom of the 'King of the Martyrs' was received he composed a very effective elegiac which can never be forgotten. He was a native of Kashan and migrated to Haifa with his family soon after the arrival of Baha Ollah. With peace ^{and} contentment he spent his last days in Acca and when his spirit soared toward the Kingdom of Abha his body was interred in the Cemetery just outside of the town. In character he was irreproachable, in truthfulness he was proverbial, in the fulfillment of his engagements he was an example, in the honesty of his purpose he was unquestioned and in the beauty of his life he was well-known.

Another person mentioned in the Tablet was Abdollah. Concerning this man he said: "This man lived in Bagdad and was notorious for his evil deeds and shady practices. He was a man of pleasure and very wicked and dissolute. He met by chance the Blessed Perfection one day and listening to His Divine Exhortations embraced the Bahai Cause and received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. His regeneration was so complete and the reformation of his character so radical that every one expressed amazement at the ^{instantaneous} change and wished to know the underlying cause of this spiritual revolution. Whereas formerly he was as base metal he was turned into shining gold. Whereas before he was tainted with the colors of Satan he became now clothed with the radiant character.

of the angels. Whereas formerly he was dead he was vivified by the pure breath of Baha Ollah. In the display of praiseworthy attributes he surpassed the degree of the seraphs. He was made of the substance of darkness but at a glance of an eye he was re-made into the essence of light. He was attached to every kind of evil habit, he became severed from aught else save God. He was extenot, cold and unresponsive to noble feelings, he became enkindled with the Fire of New birth, attracted and most sensitive to the subtle emotions of the Spirit. His moral awakening endowed him with such heavenly qualities that his simple association with others impressed them with awe and respect and created in their hearts the susceptibilities of the Kingdom of Abha. After our exile from Bagdad he walked on foot to Acca. He arrived at a time when we were incarcerated in the barrack. The guards at the gate prevented his entrance and he was sorely disappointed. I saw his face from the window of the upper story of the prison while he was walking beyond the walls of the fortification. With any exertion on my part I remembered him and by seeing the officers of the guards and convincing them that there will be no harm done whatsoever they permitted him to enter the barrack. Whenever I think of his first meeting with the Blessed Perfection in the prison, tears come to my eyes."

Another name mentioned in the above Tablet is Esmael. About the life of this man the Master said: "This man was the well-known architect of Farrokh Khan in Teheran. He was respected and beloved by all the citizens and served the community with zeal and straightforwardness. Whenever he found an opportunity he spoke about the Cause and little by little every one came to know that he was a Bahai. They advised him to be more cautious in the declaration of his faith but he became more intrepid. For this reason Baha Ollah wrote him the famous poem beginning with the verse:

'O Love! I belong to Thee, I am Thy wooer and wanderer around Thy Abode.' He was commanded to turn his face toward attention toward the Bah and sing those stirring lines with spirituality and attraction. Day or night to whichever meeting he was invited he sang the poem and made the people understand that it was sent him by his Lord. Thus it became established beyond a shadow of doubt that he was a Bahai and the enemies arose in his persecution. Farrokh Khan who was at the time the Grand Vizier sent for him

and told him that so far he has been able to protect him but now the power has gone out of his hand and because he is in danger of losing his life he advised him to leave the city. Ostad Esmail was not afraid of martyrdom but observing the Grand Vizier's perplexity said: "My highest desire is to sacrifice my life in the path of the Beloved but because I have been your architect I see you are afraid of your position, hence for your sake I will comply with your request." Leaving the royal residence of his Master, with his newly-married wife, they left the city and after awhile arrived in Bagdad. In Teheran they were accustomed to abundance, comfort, wealth and affluence but in their new home they had to face hard circumstances of poverty and wants. Notwithstanding their great destitution they were never seen to express any sadness or complain of their lots. The Blessed Perfection allotted them a room and they lived together most happily. After awhile his mother-in-law making a pilgrimage to the holy shrine of Karbala and Najaf passed through Bagdad and on her return insisted on the fact that her daughter should go with her to Teheran to visit her relatives. Ostad Esmail gave his consent to this and the mother and daughter left with the stipulation that the latter will return as soon as she has finished her visit. Arriving in Kermanshah she took her to a Mullah and asked him to divorce him from her absent husband because he was a Bahai and therefore a heterodox and the marriage not lawful. When the divorce was effected she was forced into ^{a second} marriage with a rough and coarse mulatto. Although ^{Ostad Esmail} was very fond of his wife yet when he heard this calamitous news his strong faith in God came to his aid and he stood firm in the hour of this supreme test. After our successive exiles from Bagdad to Constantinople, Adrianople and Acca the believers were also exiled to Moussel. This Ostad Esmail was at the time of his exile about 80 years old and at this advanced age he walked on foot to Acca. When he arrived in Haifa his feet were sore and blistered and he was in the utmost poverty. Having not any money to rent a room he with a number of other believers passed their nights in one of the caves on this mountain while their glad some songs of thankful ^{ness} were raised to heaven. With a few praestres for his capital he

became engaged in business. He had a small wooden box in which contained needles, pins, combs, ^{thumbles, rings} and spools of thread. Every morning he got out of his cage and made a tour around the town. Two or three piastres profit, daily, satisfied him and the hour that this was procured he returned to his natural mountain abode to enjoy the fruit of his labor. He ate his frugal meal with such wealth of spiritual pleasure that even the Kings might envy him. After sometimes I sent for him and through the kindly assistance of the guards I brought him to the barrack and took him into the glorious presence of the Blessed Perfection. Because he was so very poor he could not afford to drink tea every day and during his stay with us in the prison I served him with it every morning and evening. Drinking the cup of tea he would exclaim with delight: 'Oh Master! This is not tea. It is the vivifying breath of the Spirit'. In brief, he spent many years between Haifa and Acca receiving the divine Favors of the Manifestation till he passed away into the larger life of the Kingdom. He was indeed a blessed soul; he was the essence of love and the embodiment of Kindness. He endured many sufferings for the sake of truth and was continually living in the station of thankfulness and gratitude. Notwithstanding all the persecutions he was always serene and happy. In his estimation hardship in the path of truth was the most great beauty. The vicissitudes were innumerable but we were continually sustained by the Confirmations of the Holy Spirit. During the days of tests and trials for the sake of God the souls are gladdened and the hearts are rejoiced by the uninterrupted outpourings of the Merciful."

This morning our Master was walking in the garden and speaking with a number of strangers who called on him. Because it was Friday he attended the Mahamadan prayer in the Mosque and exhorted the worshippers to obey the laws of their Creator. Three Zoroastrian believers arrived from Adasayah bringing the news that the locust seeds are hatched and the larvae are like flies. After ^{a few} days they will start to eat every blade of grass that happens to lie on their way. The Master sent two beautiful peacocks and a large bouquet of flowers for Mr Strune, the American Consul and he may call on him before long. I was with him many hours during the day and the evening and experienced his boundless