

A Tablet of ‘Abdu’l-Bahá

He is God.

O thou who art steadfast in the Covenant! A letter was dispatched some days previously, containing a letter written to the spouse of Áqá Músá; a testimony was likewise composed, which was sent as an enclosure. God willing, they will arrive.

Thou didst write that even in times of hardship the friends are still engaged in teaching. Such indeed is the attribute of the well-favoured, and the characteristic of the sincere: that by no obstacle can they be obstructed, nor by any eventuality can they be deprived; nay rather, under the direst constraint and calamity, they continue to promote the teachings of the Kingdom on high, while under the threat of sword and fetter they raise the cry “How blessed are we!” and “How blissful is our lot!”

The vicissitudes of the age encompass friend and foe alike. It is not the fate of mortal man ever to attain unto tranquillity of heart and soul. For this reason, one must not attach importance to the changes and chances of the fleeting days of life; rather, he should arise to perform whatsoever it behoveth and beseemeth him to do, irrespective of whether he be reposing upon a couch of ease or threatened by the sword of his enemy.

Thou didst write concerning the progress of the friends of Bákú, reporting that in all worldly and heavenly respects they have charted a course of advancement and success, becoming one and all distinguished from all other communities.

As for the small number that have fallen a prey to the wicked-doers, this may be accounted for by the consideration that when the fire of sedition is kindled amid the dry jungle, it is inevitable that some verdant trees too will be consumed.

For this reason I wrote previously that the friends must hold aloof from all confessions in political affairs, and conduct themselves in an impartial manner. They should attend the gatherings of no party, nor seek fellowship with any faction. Praise be to God! Through the preservation of the teachings of the Blessed Beauty, in all parts of the world the friends have remained protected and preserved.

On behalf of these few souls who, by chance, have quaffed the cup of martyrdom—and likewise those souls who have suffered financial loss—fervent prayers and supplications were offered at the Threshold of Oneness, that the abundance of God’s grace might encompass all, and those souls who chanced to be slain might, in the Court of Oneness, be accounted martyrs. Such is the highest hope of this servant.

Áqá Músá—upon whom be the mercy of God, and His Divine good-pleasure—was not successful, during his lifetime, in founding and instituting in Bákú a Mashriqu’l-Adhkár; and I too, as thou knowest, accepted naught from him. If, however, he had erected this mighty structure, what an influence it would by now have exerted, alike in the kingdoms of earth and heaven!

Now the wealth is fallen into the hands of people who, as thou sayest, he would not have consented should enter his home, and whom he held in the utmost abhorrence. Take heed, then, O men of insight! Gracious God! The wealthy friends exert no endeavour, nor render any service, such is their attachment to these earthly riches. Yet then it chanceth that after death their wealth falleth into the hands of their enemies! These latter feast thereon, and, as the common people say, “recite the Fátihih.”¹

Thou and some others had requested permission to come on a visit to the Holy Land. During these days, to come on such a visit would entail much trouble and many difficulties, such that ye might conceivably spend six months on the way. Do ye postpone the time of your visit to another occasion.

The Glory of Glories rest upon thee.

14 July 1919

—‘Abdu’l-Bahá

- 1 The opening Súrih of the Qur'án; in other words, they pay lip service to the memory of the deceased, over whom the Fátihih would be recited at the time of interment. ←