

Mirza Muhammad Ali's Will & Testament

Introduction

1. Introduction

Unlike his brother Ibn-al-Baha Badiullah, Muhammad Ali, as far as he is known, has left no memoirs. In the Testament, the Primal Point, Baha, and Abdul Baha Abbas are not designated by name. They are referred to as the Forerunner, God, and the Most Mighty Branch respectively. However, read between the lines, in the Testament Muhammad Ali defines and defends his position.

He is carefully polite towards Abdul Baha Abbas; he condemns Abdul Baha's innovations in Bahatism, particularly the fake Imamzadeh (marabout) created by Abdul Baha himself for himself by his erection a Mausoleum on Mount Carmel in erroneous interpretation of Baha's "Holy" writ.

Muhammad Ali was instrumented in the recovery and suppression of the Point's and Baha's writings establishing the Point's dispensation and the vicegerency of Subh-i Azal as the appointed successor of the Primal Point. pp. 10-17, the *Tanbihun-Naimin* (The Awakening of the Sleepers).

He was also responsible interior economy of Bahatism during Baha's "epiphany," at Acre (p. 2, Ibn-al-Baha Badiullah's memoirs). As such, he was privy to the inner working of Baha's machinery. Like the Triumvirate, namely, Baha, Abdul Baha, and Shoghi Effendi, Muhammad Ali has passed to the mercy of god, survived by his masterpieces in calligraphy.

1.1 The Tone of the Will

It must however be put down to the credit of Muhammad Ali that his Testament is not tainted with invectives or abusive language, although, on evidence of Ibn-al-Baha Badiullah's memoirs, he suffered a great deal at the hands of Abdul Baha, and is designated by Ibn-al-Baha Badiullah as the wronged-one.

In contrast to Muhammad Ali's Testament, Abdul Baha in his Will & Testament, assumes the airs of the wronged-one; he associates the attempted fratricide alleged by Baha; he gives unbridled licence to his allegations of fulminations against Muhammad Ali, his son Shuaullah, and Ibn-al-Baha Badiullah. Documentary evidence is produced to substantiate the allegations which must be accepted by Abdul Baha's followers as gospel truth.

Muhammad Ali's Will & Testament, though lithographed, has never been made public. Apparently, this defect arises from the practice of concealment of religious opinions dictated by prudential motives (Ketman or Taqiya in Persian).

The testament is being made public for the first time and its historical interest need not be stressed. It will enable interested readers to become acquainted with the Bahais dispute inter se.

1.2 Some Terms Used By Baha

According to Mirza Muhammad Ali's Will and Testament, supported by quotations from Baha's holy texts, Baha speaks of:

- a. himself as the Ancient Root (Asl-i-Qadim), The Lote-Tree of the Extremity [Sidral-al-Muntaha], and the Tree (al-Sidra) in the sphere of divinity;
- b. himself as the Branch (Ghusn) from the Lote-Tree of the extremity or the Tree, and as the Haykal (Temple) in his human personality;
- c. The Book (Kitab) to denote the Most Holy Book (Al-Kitab Al-Aqdas);
- d. The Book of the Covenant (Kitab-i-Ahdi) to denote his will and testament;
- e. The Haykal (Temple) to denote his particular revelation, i.e. Kitab-i-Haykal;
- f. The Branches (Aghsan, plural of Ghusn) to denote his four sons;
- g. The Bough that has branched out from the Ancient Root or (فرع) (منتشعب از اصل قديم) to denote those referred to in (f) above;
- h. The Most High of Creation (على خلق) to denote those referred to in (f) above;

1.3 An Overview

His line of argument is as follows:

God is unknowable except through his manifestation, the prophet. The prophet of the age was Sayyid Ali Muhammad, the Promised Qaim and the Mahdi, whose advent is expected in Islam. With all his might and sovereignty, he designated himself as the forerunner of a greater manifestation of god, Baha, whose name he concealed in his consummate wisdom and called it “He Who Shall Appear”, or “He Whom God Shall Manifest”.

The Point's statements that “you will attain all the good in the ninth year”, and “you will meet with god in the ninth year”, and Sheikh Ahmad of Ihsa's (founder of the Sheikhi school of thought) document that you will know the news of it “after a while”, come true and in the year A.H. 1269 in Iraq on the day of the resurrection of the Quran “He Whom God Shall Manifest”, of the Bayan appeared in the person of Baha. This was however a “private manifestation”, of Baha. Baha's “general manifestation” took place in A.H. 1280 followed by the revelation of inspired words.

A line of distinction is to be drawn between a partial manifestation which denotes prophethood and total manifestation which stands for divinity.

Baha's is total and supreme manifestation of god. Baha is the pivot of

Himself as the Lote-Tree (Sidra) or the Lote-Tree of the Limit (Sidra-al-Muntaha) when not in human form;

Most High of Creatures (Ala al-Khalq) to denote his four sons, Abdul Baha Abbas, Muhammad Ali, Ziyauallah and Badiullah;

Servitude (Ubudiyya) with reference to himself as the manifestation of Service;

Supreme Pen (Qalam-i Ala) to denote himself as the instrument whereby God's pleasure is made known to men;

Of himself in human form as the Temple (Haykal) as being the "Corporeal" temple which the Deity inhabits;

Temple (Haykal) in other places to denote his particular revelation, the Kitab-i Haykal (the Book of Haykal).

2.2 "Turning unto" (توجه تواججھ)

Again in the considered opinion of Muhammad Ali, the word "Turning unto" (Tawajjuh) appearing in Baha's Will & Testament, whereby Branches (Aqsan) are commanded to turn unto Abdul Baha Abbas has three meanings:

Turning of Creatures unto God, Baha, as in the Cause of religious worship;

Turning of God, Baha, unto his Creatures as in the case of Baha's revelations addressed to his Creatures; and Turning of Creatures unto Creatures.

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as stated in his Will and Testament, the expression "to turn unto" conveys the following meaning:

- a. The turning of Creatures unto God, as in the case of the ordinances of divine worship, whereunto they are commanded ;
- b. The turning of God unto his creatures, as when Baha says in his Epistles 'In truth we have turned unto you; and
- c. The turning of creatures unto creatures.

The expression 'Turn unto' appearing in the Book of Covenant [i.e. Turn unto him whom God has meant ... see Baha's sons] conveys the third sense, namely, the turning of creatures unto creatures, as Baha considered himself sanctified form and exalted above, peers, partners, likenesses and similitudes, and designated the Branches as the Most High Creation. Therefore the intendment is the linking up of creatures with their Most High Creation for the elevation of the word and the diffusion of its light. Sir Abbas Effendi cannot be held to be a partner with god, Baha, in the turning unto.

The text sums as follows:-

« كذلك كلمه توجه را كه در كتاب عهد نازل شده اگر به تصور خود ؟ نمائيم و او را در توجه شريك خود قرار دهيم با آيه وضو را شاهد آوريم و زياره غلو نموده او را نفس خود ذكر كنيم چگونه خود را تابع اوامر دانيم در فرقان ميفرمايد اطيعوا الله و اطيعوا الرسول و الی الامر منكم واولی الامر را ثالث خدا و برسول ذكر

term 'Good News' is applicable to manifestation of God exclusively. It is however, customary for a predecessor-in-office. But this designation means nomination or appointment to define the competent authority. It does not mean Good-News.

On the strength of Baha's epistle quoted in Mirza Muhammad Ali's will, Baha's four sons, or "Verily the Branches who have branched from the Tree", "are indeed my proofs amongst my creatures and my sweet savours between the heaven and of earth."

The text sums as follows:

ان الأغصان المنشعبة من السدره انهم ادلائى بين بريتي و نفحاتى بين السموات والارض هل ترون شريكاً او شبيهاً ربكم الله و رب العالمين لاتكلموا بما لد اذن الله لكم و اتقوا الرحمن و كونوا من الم ..

2.5 Immaculateness (Ismat عصمت)

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, conception of partnership in God's Immaculateness, treated as of Supreme and those ones - in allusion to Sir Abbas Effendi's pretensions thereto - was at variance with Baha's holy texts, whereunder he reserved the station of Supreme Immaculateness for himself exclusively.

The text sums as follows:

از برای همه اگر در عصمت شریک قرار داده شود و عصمت کبری و صغری ذکر گردد و دون او معصوم و مختار و محدود آید چگونه با آیات الهیه توافق یابد زیرا در کتاب اشراقات شرح مسبوطی در ذکر عصمت نازل شده و جهد را دارای عصمت کبری و یفعل مایشاء فرموده و ما دون را مأمور محکوم شمرده و در ظل کلمه قرار داده

The passage in the Aqdas (E.T. P.37) on the point is quite clear. I have therefore dispensed with quotation from the Book of Ishraqat.

2.6 Subsequent Manifestations (Zuhur ظهور)

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as expressed in his will and testament, Sir Abbas Effendi cannot be presumed to be a new Manifestation, as such a presumption is inconsistent with, and repugnant to, Baha's specific provision in the Aqdas [E.T. P.34] which says that "Whoever claims command before the completion of a thousand years is a false liar."

The text sums as follows:

« اگر او ار ظهوری فرض نمائیم چنانچه شخصی گفته آن شمس حقیقت از هیکل مقدس غروب فرمود و در هیکل دیگر طلوع نمود در اینصورت آیات صریح که در کتاب اقدس و الواح دیگر نازل شده و تصریح فرموده که تاهزار سال اگر کسی بیاید و ادعایی کند او را قبول ننمائید چگونه این آیات ممکنات را تأویل و تفسیر نمائیم و به چه برهانی خود را تابع حضرت احدیت و امامرش شناسیم . میفرماید « مبشر آمد خبر نمود متمم آمد تمام فرمود دیگر ظهور از برای که و از برای چه
«««

In his memoirs, PP.3-4 Ibn-al-Baha Badiullah states that Sir Abbas Effendi claimed to have covered the prescribed period of one thousand years by one footstep.

2.7 Interpreter (Mubayyin) and the Book (Kitab)

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as expressed in his will and testament, the interpreter of Baha's Aqdas cannot be restricted to one particular Branch, namely Sir Abbas Effendi, as Baha in a declaratory ruling has further ruled that what was meant by "the Book" was the Kitab-i Aqdas" and by "Bough that has branched out, the Branch", without differentiating between the Most Great Branch and the Most Mighty Branch. The duty of the interpreter, Mirza Muhammad Ali maintains, is to tell the truth, not to make statements at will, and not to make an idle excuse of divine utterance, whereby to require his followers to become captive to his dominance and committed to his personal opinions.

The text sums as follows:-

« اگر مبین را یک شخص و منحصر به او دانیم در مراسله ورقا در جواب سائل میفرماید: « مقصود از کتاب کتاب اقدس و فرع منشعب غصن بوده » دیگر نفرموده اعظم یا اکبر و کتاب را هم تعیین فرموده نه جمیع الواح در شور و در هر حال شرط حجت بیان موافقت با کلام حق است اگر آنچه مبین گوید با بیان خود در شور و الواح توافق نماید لایق تصدیق است و الا از درجه اعتبار ساقط وظیفه مبین آنکه حقیقت گوید نه به خواهش خود ذکری نماید و بیان خود را بهانه ساخته تابعان را اسیر حکم و رهین افکار خود خواهد »

"The Bough that has branched out" appears in a passage in the Aqdas [E.T. P. 70] which lays down that after Baha's death "refer what you did not understand in the Book to the Bough which branches from the self-subsistent stock". The term "Bough", defined as the "Branch" in the declaratory ruling would appear to include all sons of Baha. Presumably, Sir Abbas Effendi and Mirza Muhammad Ali, as appointees by specific nomination under Baha's Will and Testament, were the only two interpreters of Baha's Laws. Mirza Muhammad Ali would appear to be a better and more qualified interpreter than Sir Abbas Effendi since he was the reviser or weeder of the tares or obnoxious passages in Baha's Holy texts, including the Aqdas. Indeed Mirza Muhammad Ali was the one who saw the printing of some of the expurgated versions of Baha's holy texts between the years 1889-1890 in Bombay. - Bahai quarterly, First Quarter 1935, P.14 (next page):

BEHAI
QUARTERLY

Devoted to the teachings of the Great Sun of Truth which
appeared on the horizon of the East "Beha 'U'llah."



O THOU MOST RESPLENDENT GLORY!

Editor and Publisher

SHUA ULLAH BEHAI

Eldest Grandson of Beha 'U'llah

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of the earth. O friends: arise noble souls and fulfill His command! Become the shining stars of the heaven of kindness and reflect as such upon all beings. Follow His footsteps, and with united efforts, using the weapons of His commands, endeavor to awaken and save your brethren in humanity from the ever renewed web of religious prejudices and its vicious corruption.

In this message I have no other motive but to awaken and elevate the thoughts of my brethren in humanity. THINK! my brethren; and may peace and happiness encompass you at all times.

January, 1935, Acre, Palestine.

GHUSNI AKBAR
MOHAMMED ALI BESHAL

I extend my humble gratitude to the chosen son of Beha 'U'llah Ghusni Akbar for his timely contribution to this periodical. Indeed, it is a great honor to publish his instructive messages.

The world knows little of the services which this great personage has rendered to the Bahai cause, as he has always avoided publicity, detested notoriety and shunned self-glory.

For the enlightenment of my readers, I shall record hereunder one of his services of which I was fortunate in being an eye witness and a participant.

In the year eighteen eighty-nine, by the command of Beha 'U'llah, he journeyed to East India for the sole purpose of publishing some of the sacred Books; India being the only Oriental country in which printing presses were available at that time.

I was commanded to join him also, though in my teens. We traveled by steamship from Haifa to Port Said, remaining there a few days with the friends; then proceeded to Aden, and from there to Bombay.

This being my first visit to the foreign lands, I was greatly impressed, especially with the customs, habits and the sincerity of the natives of India. We remained in Bombay over a year, during which time Ghusni Akbar succeeded in organizing a printing firm called "Nasiri Press," and published five volumes of the teachings of Beha 'U'llah in the Persian and the Arabic languages.

After our return to Akka, copies of the said volumes were brought to the presence of Beha 'U'llah and received His approval.

Indeed, this was a great service to the cause, and deserves the gratitude of all the Behaists, for to this day, of which forty-four years have elapsed, these are the only outstanding volumes of the teachings of Beha 'U'llah ever published.

I hope to be able to present to my readers the Biography of this great personage in the near future.

EDITOR.

FOURTEEN

2.8 Executionship or Guardianship (Wasayat وصایت)

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as set out in his will and testament, to presume an executor or guardian for god, Baha, conflicts with Baha's laws and is a vain

imagination, as Baha states in a special epistle :-

The creative truth [i.e. Baha] is visible like unto the sun in the mid-heaven. He possesses not earthly ornaments of gold in his holy court to call for an executioner for division. To suggest an executor for his cause is rebellious on your part against God, the self-subsistent Overseer.

Because the cause has revolved and shall continue to revolve, round him. Beware lest you give peers to or make executors for god.

The text sums as follows:

« اگر ذکر وصایت نمائیم و از برای خود وصی تصور کنیم در رساله مبارکه در جواب علی محمد سراج میفرماید « باری آیام ظهور است و خود چون شمس فی وسط السماء ظاهر و زخرفی از دنیا در ساحت قدسش موجود نه که محتاج به وصی باشد آنرا قسمت نماید و اگر میگوئید در امرش محتاج به وصی است هذا < منکم علی الله المهیمن القیوم چه که اگر طائف حل نفسش بوده و خواهد بود و آن ؟ قد آمنه ابدأ ایامکم ان تجعلوا الله وزیراً و نظیراً و ... وصیاً و قریناً و مثلاً » مختصر هرکه در این بیانات مبارکه مرقومه دقت نماید شهادت دهد که تصور وصی تصویری است واهی و الته مخالف بیان الهی»

The principal (Asl) as teller-of-God-News (مبشر) about the coming of the accessory (Far'i). A passage in the Aqdas [E.T. P.56] sums as follows :- "... then turn to the One whom god desires, the one who is a branch from this ancient root."

In his will and testament, Baha says the passage refers to the Most Great Branch Sir Abbas Effendi.

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as expressed in his Will and Testament, to presume passage in the said passage in the Aqdas as the Good News and to speak of Baha's Will and Testament as interpretive thereof would be tantamount to regard the Master and the Followed One, namely, Baha, as the Teller-of-Good-News about the coming of his own creature Sir Abbas Effendi. The presumption relegates Baha, the principal, into the status of a mere Teller-of-Good-News about the coming of Sir Abbas Effendi, the accessory, and exhibits Baha, the king, as having summoned the people unto Sir Abbas Effendi, his own creature. Such a presumption, Mirza Muhammad Ali, stresses is void.

The text sums as follows:

« اگر آیه کتاب اقدس را بشارت تصور نمده و کتاب عهد را مفسر آن قرار دهیم چگونه قب راصی شود که مولی و مقتدای را مبشر عبد خود گوید در این صورت چه امتیازی از برای ظهور اعظم ابهی ماند آیا جایز است اصل بشارت بشارت بظهور دهد و سلطان مردم را به بنده خود خواند بطلان این مطلب بدیهی است و هرکس آنرا ادراک نماید زیرا تا موجود اعظم و اهم نباشد وعده به او داده نشود »

2.9 The Book (Kitab) and the House of Justice (Bayt-al-Adl بیت العدل)

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as set forth in his will and testament, the cause of God was consummated by Baha's manifestation, and no matter remained unprovided for : the ordinances of divine worship are governed by what God has sent down in the Book, namely, the Aqdas, and politics vest in the House of Justice. The text sums as follows:

« ای یاران امرالله در ظهور مبارک تکمل شد و مطلبی ناقص نماند عبادات بمانزله الله فی الکتاب و ساسیات بیت عدل اختصاص یافت و انتهای ظهورات مکرر نازل و تصریح شد. »

A passage in the Aqdas [E.T. P.39] provides that after Baha's death, return is to be made to the Aqdas in case of differences on a matter.

Another passage in the Aqdas [E.T. PP. 31-32] lays down that in every city a House of Justice is to be set up to consult about the welfare of creatures and to choose what is the choices.

The provisions of the Eighth Eshraqh in Baha's Book of Ishraqat, Tarazat and Tajalliat, Bombay Edition, one commended to be an integral part of the Aqdas. Under these provisions affairs of the nation are within the jurisdiction of the House of Justice. The House of Justice is required to put into practice what it deems to be the expediency of the time.

The ordinances of divine worship are governed by the Aqdas and politics vest in the House of Justice.

The Text sums as follows:

« اشراق هشتم این فقره از قلم اعلی در حین مسطور و از کتاب اقدس بحساب امور ملت معلوم است رجال بیت العدل ایشانند امناء الله بین عباد و مطالع الامر فی بلاده یا حزب الله مربی عالم عدل است چه که دارای دو رکن است مجازات و مکافات و این دو رکن چشمه اند برای حیات اهل عام چونکه هر روز را امری و هر حینی را حکمتی مقتضی امور به بیت العدل راجع تا آنچه را مصلحت وقت دانند معمول دارند » « نفوسیکه لوجه الله بر خدمت امر قیام نمایند ایشان عارفند به الهامات غیبی الهی بر کل اطاعت لازم امور ساسیه کل راجع است به بیت العدل و عبادات بما انزله الله فی الکتاب یا اهل بهاء شما مشارق محبت و مطالع عنایت الهی بوده و هستید لسان مرا بسبب و لعن احدی نیالانید و چشم مرا از آنچه لایق نیست حفظ نمائید آنچه درآید بنمائید اگر مقبول افتاد مقصور حاصل و الا تعرض باطل زور به نفس مقلبین الی الله المهیمن القیوم سبب حزن مشوید تا چه رسد به فساد و نزاع آمده؟ در ظل سدره عنایت الهی تربیت شوید و بما اراده الله داخل گردید همه را اوراق یک؟ و قطر های یک؟ »

The eighth Ishraq corroborates Mirza Muhammad Ali's considered opinion that politics are within competence of the House-of-Justice.

Late Mirza Shuaullah, son of Mirza Muhammad Ali, was the editor and publisher of the Bahai Quarterly. P543 Twenty-six av., Kenosha, wis., U.S.A

In the issue third and fourth quarter, 1936, PP. 24-25, excerpt are given from the "Words of Paradise" written by Baha. The following excerpt is from the "Word of God in the Eighth Leaf of the Exalted Paradise": "The trustees (members) of the House of Justice must consult upon the ordinances as they are outwardly revealed in the Book and then enforce of these whatever prove agreeable to them. Verily, God will inspire them with that which He willeth, and He is the Ruler,

the knower."

On the strength of the Aqdas, supplemented by the Eighth Ishraq, the House of Justice is the sole competent authority to deal with secular matters. It is also the authority to deal with spiritual matters, subject to the provisions of the Aqdas.

The functions and duties of the House of Justice, among other things, are:

to deal with prospectives that escheat to the House of Justice in default of one or more classes of heirs in cases of succession and inheritance and "to spend them on orphans and widows, and what benefits the multitude of people" (Aqdas, E.T. P.30);

- a. to control religious endowment which vest in the House of Justice after the death of Baha and his sons, and "if Baha's cause is established throughout the lands to spend them in the high places of this cause and for what they were commanded by the powerful, the mighty one. Otherwise the endowments return to the people of Baha "(Aqdas, E.T P.36)
- b. to deal with a third of all the fines [i.e. blood money] which is payable to the House of Justice, whose members are admonished to do absolute justice and to spend all that has been collected by them in the way commanded by a wise knower ." (Aqdas, E.T. P.38). This one-third is notional as the amount of blood money [i.e. diya] is not provided for in the Aqdas.
- c. to assess fines in cases of adultery, theft and pederasty (Aqdas E.T. PP.30-37; P.38; P.53). In the question and answer, treated by Bahais as the Supplement to the Aqdas, discretionary powers are given by Baha to the House of Justice to asses these fines:
سؤال – از حد زنا و لواط و سارق و مقادیر آن، جواب: مقادیر حد به بیت عدل راجع است.
- d. to provide for the education of children in certain cases as the House of Justice is the shelter of the poor and the needy (Aqdas, E.T P.37-38);
- e. Apparently to receive the prescribed tax known as the duties owed to God (Huquq Allah) which was payable to Baha under the provision which says that "If anyone possesses a hundred Mitqhal of Gold, nineteen Mitqhal of them are for God, the maker of earth and heaven." (Aqdas, E.T. PP.50-51); as amended in the Answer & Question:
بالاخره حد نصاب در سؤال و جواب از حد نوزده مثقال گرفته میگوید: «مقصود «میزان حد نوزده است و الا نصاب حقوق از نوزده است
- f. to determine relatives within the prescribed degrees of matrimony, for which no provision is made in Aqdas (Aqdas, E.T. P.33 and Question and Answer;

- g. to deal with politics and to legislate for civil obligations, having regard to the exigencies of the time and the requirement of expediency and cation (The Eighth Ishraqat)

The implementation of the several matters summarised above as well as the other provisions of the Aqdas such as "whoever burns a house intentionally, burn him" (E.T. P.40) and "Whoever kills a person with intent, kill him" (E.T. P.40), requires an executive authority. The House of Justice, as a legislative body, also needs an executive authority to carry its legislation into effect. Therefore the enforcement of any of the ordinances contained in the Aqdas presupposes the emergence of a state with Bahaism as its state religion, in default of which the ordinance, as well as the House of Justice, apparently concurred by Baha as a parliamentary institution, are deemed to be dormant or dead letter.

In fact in an epistle addressed to two of his followers Baha refers to what he terms the "Husayni state" in allusion to the Imam Husayn whom Baha asserted identity whose writ, according to Baha, is to run for at least one thousand years."

« در لوح حاجی حسن و آقا علی نازل: لعمری قد انتهیت الظهورات به هذا الظهور الاعظم من يدعی امرأ قبل اتمام الف سنة كاملة انه في المفترين في لوح حفيظ و الذي يا قل هذا البيان انه ممن اعرض عن الحمن و كان من الخاسرين اگر چه از برای متبحرين از قبل ذكر دولت حسینی ثمانين الف سنه شود ولكن اهل بها اقلا بالف سنة قائل باشند. »

In a passage (P.18) in the book of Mubin, Tablets of Baha, Bombay Edition, Baha says with certainty that God will create a people who will help the youth [i.e. Baha], will purge the earth of defilement of any and every outcast polytheist, will rise up to serve the cause, and will conquer territories in his name. The text sums as follows:

« بيعت قوماً ينصرون الغلام و يظهرن الارض من ؟ كل مشرك مردود و قونی علی الامر ؟ و البلاد باسمی المقتدر القيوم و يدخلن الديار و يأخذ ؟ كل العباد هذا من ؟ ان ؟ شديد بالعدل انه لمحيط علی من فی السموات والارض ينزل ما يشاء علی قدر مقدور و لو يقوم احد من ؟ مقابله ما خلق فی الابداع ليكون غالباً بغلبة ارادتي هذا من قدرتي ولكن لا يعرفون »

In another passage, P.136, ibid, Baha notes with assurance that ere long God shall send kings who will render aid and assistance to his saints.

سوف يبعث الله من الملوك من يعين اولياؤه

Such was the conception of the "youth" of the House of Justice in a temporal and spiritual Husayni state, rid of flotsam and jetsam of spurned polytheists.

As opposed to the "youth", Praise be God, stresses Sir Abbas Effendi, the divine cause in the Bahai cycle is pure spirituality, divorced from the material world.

The text sums as follows:

« الحمد لله امر الهی در دوره بهائی روحانیت منحصر است تعلق بعالم جمالی
ندارد
مکاتیب عبدالبهاء جلد دوم صحیفه 206. »

Mirza Muhammad Ali's Will & Testament Abbas Effendi's Claims

3. Abbas Effendi's Claims

In discovering Abbas Effendi's claims Muhammad Ali, on Baha's authority quoted in the Testament, makes the following observations;

1. Branches (Aqsan) are Baha's "Proof" among his "Creation", and his "Fragrances between the heavens and the earth", while Baha is "above all names and attributes, free from all likenesses and similitude, and without peer and associate".
2. The word "turning unto", Abdul Baha appearing in Baha's Will and Testament connotes "a line" between Baha's "Creation" and "his Most High of the Creatures", intended to exalt god's, Baha's, word and to disseminate god's Baha's, utterances.
3. The allegation of "manifestation of Service", with reference to Abdul Baha is untenable.
4. The Divine Unity and the Supreme Immaculateness are peculiar to god, Baha, to the entire exclusion of all others. As is laid down in Baha's Most Holy Book, men should know that Baha is the manifestation of god in the world, without which knowledge good actions are of no avail. God. Baha. Admits of no partnership in the divine unity and the supreme immaculateness.
5. "the temple of god" (Haykal-i Rabb), erected by the Branch (Ghusn), namely Baha, is Baha's "Kitab-i Haykal", (the Book of Haykal), and not the Maqam erected by Abdul Baha on Mount Carmel by reason of his branch-hood (Ghusniyya).

3.1 Allegation of Tampering & Corrupting of Baha's Holy Texts

Allegations that Muhammad Ali has tampered with Baha's writings are dismissed as absurd. Muhammad Ali challenges Abdul Baha to produce documentary evidence to substantiate his allegations.

Under an arrangement made by Baha, Sir Abbas Effendi, his mother, his sister and his daughters

resided in Acre. He was Baha's minister for external affairs, and was granted audience by Baha once a week. Baha, his other wives, Mirza Muhammad Ali and his brothers lived in Baha's mansion at Bahja House, a few miles away from Acre. Mirza Muhammad Ali was in charge of the interior affair.

In fact, he had seen all the holy texts and epistles. Baha enjoined upon his sons, namely Mirza Muhammad Ali, Mirza Ziyauallah, and Mirza Badiullah to take the utmost care for custody of his writings but they fell into the hands of the She of Isfahan [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi's wife lady Munira].

Zeyn-al-Mugarrabin (The Ornament of the Favoured) (whose real name is Zeyn-al-Abedin of Najaf Abad) referred to in the passage) together with Mirza Muhammad Ali were specifically appointed by Baha to overhaul his holy texts and to weed out the tares or the obnoxious passages in them. After the expurgation, Mirza Muhammad Ali proceeded to Bombay in 1889 and had some of the expurgated holy texts printed there.

Baha is quoted as saying: "Any writing held by the Most Great Branch [i.e. Sir Abbas Effendi] will fall into her hands and be destroyed by her." - Mirza Badiullah's memoirs, typed copy P.8. The writings were removed for safe custody. They were not carried off by deception as alleged by Shoghi Effendi. To this day, they are in safe custody of Mirza Muhammad Ali's surviving son Mirza Aminullah.

In his Will and Testament Mirza Muhammad Ali denies categorically having tampered with Baha's holy texts, as alleged against him by Sir Abbas Effendi and his partisans. He dismisses such allegations as absurd and challenges his accusers to produce documentary evidence to substantiate their allegations.

The text sums as follows:

« تحریف که انتشار داده شده حرفیست سخیف و وهمی است باطل وضعیف کتاب هیکل که آن معرف مطبوع ذکر شده دو نسخه و آن باختلاف تاریخ به خط زین المقربین موجود است که در ایام مبارک نوشته و حرفی با مطبوع و مخالف نیست بیانید و ببینید و این امتحان را علت انزاله اختلاف در آثار قرار دهید و اگر لوحی گفته شده که تحریف گشته آیا چنین لوحی کسی به شما داده و ابراز نموده هرگاه نفسی لوحی بیاورد و بگوید از اثر قلم اعلی است آن را به هر اسباب که امروزه در میان ملل متمدنه رواج است امتحان کنید و کمال دقت و اهتمام؟ دارید و پس از آن برد و قبول مبادرت نمائید بقول مشهور تنها به قاضی نروید »

3.2 The Lord's Temple (Haykal-i-Rab) and the Branch (Ghusn)

In his al-Kawakib-al-Durriyya, Vol. II PP. 47-48, composed by him prior to his abjuration of Bahaism and return to Islam noted Bahai missionary Mirza Abd-al-Husayn Ayati surnamed Awara one of the most prominent Hands of the Cause, writes:

از تصادفات غریبه اینکه بزرگان اسلام اصرار کردند و سلطان عثمانی مبادرت نمود که حضرت بهاءالله؟ اراضی توجه دهند احدی متذکر نشد که ارسال آنحضرت باین نقاط بهترین وسیله خواهد شد برای پیشرفت امر بهائی و طریق

استدلالی مفتوح خواهد کرد بر وجه بهائیان که بهائیان بآن استدلال میکنند بسیار است ولی واضح تر از همه دو چیز استت یکی بلند شدن خیمه رب در کوه کرمل و دیگر برخواستن شخصی که نام او غصن است و ساختن معبد رب را در آن جبل مقدس. بلی مصداق این دو نبوت بر صبق عقیده بهائیان باین صورت در آمد که ابتداء خیمه بهاءالله در آن کوه بر پا شد و بعد از آن در دوره غصن اعظم مقام اعلی در کوه کرمل ساخته شد و به دست مبارک عبدالبهاء که غصن مذکور در تورات است جسد نقطه اولی در آن مقام قرار گرفت و بنا شدن هیکل یا معبد رب باین قضیه مصداق یافت. حضرت بهاءالله بعد از ورود بآن ارض وقتی را بکوه کرمل تشریف برده امر فرمود خیمه حضرتش را در زیر سروهائی که در آن کوه است بر پا کردند ... خلاصه این خیمه در آن کوه برپا شد و ؟ که بعداً خواهیم دانست که چگونه به تصرف عبد البهء در آمد و مقام اعلی ساخته شد آنروز به نظر حضرت بهاءالله رسید و در حق آن مقام چنین فرمودند « خوبست این زمین برای رب حضرت اعلی خریده شود.»

This inspired and authorized statement by Mirza Abd-al-Husayn Ayati surnamed Awara reflects the consensus of opinion of the followers of Sir Abbas Effendi about fulfilment of two prophecies, namely, a) the pitching of the Lord's [i.e. Baha's] tent on Mount Carmel, to which Baha refers in his epistle to the Son of the Wolf, Juli Chamblor's translation, P.112 and b) the erection of the Lord's temple by Sir Abbas Effendi in his capacity as the branch (Ghusn) referred to in the Pentateuch on Mount Carmel on site pointed out to him by Baha.

In the considered opinion of Mirza Muhammad Ali, as set out in his will and testament, it is Baha who, as the branch (Ghusn) in his human personality, has constructed the Lord's temple which stands for his Kitab-i Haykal (The Book of the Temple) foretold by the prophets of the past. The text sums as follows:-

باری حضرت مقصود بی مثال هیکل مقدس خود را غصن نامیده و آن غصن حقیقت هیکل رب را که عبارت از کتاب هیکل است بنا فرموده و اخبار انبیای قبل در این باب انجام یافته و در آخر کتاب هیکل مذکور میفرماید: کذلک عمرنا الهیکل بایادی القدرة والافتدار ان کنتم تعلمون هذا ؟ و عدتم به فی الکتاب تفریوا الیه هذا خیر لکم ان کنتم ؟ انصفوا یا ملاً الارض هذا خیر ام الهیکل الذی ؟ من الطیبین توجهوا الیه کذلک امرکم من لدی الله المهیمن القیوم اتبعوا الامم احمدوا الله ربکم فیما علیکم انه هو الحمد لا اله الا هو یظهر مایشاء بقوله کن فیکون»

To regard the tomb-shrine constructed on Mount Carmel as the promised temple and to presume the Most Great Branch by reason of his branch-hood, Mirza Muhammad Ali stressed, to be its constructor is, in the presence of Baha's express text, a vain imagination. The text sums as follows:

حال به مناسبت غصنیت مقامیکه در کوه کرمل ساخته شده اگر آنرا هیکل بدانیم و غصن اعظم را هیکل موعود دانیم و غصن اعظم را بانی آن فرض نموده آنچه در کتب قبل ذکر شده به این تصور تعبیر و تفسیر نمائیم البتبع ارباب انصاف پس از ملاحظه تصریح قلم اعلی در باره کتاب هیکل چنانچه مرقوم شده شهادت خواهد

دارد که اینگونه اذکار واهی است و مخالف بیان الهی زیرا فرموده این است آن
هیکلی که در کتاب به آن وعده داده شده.

What Mirza Muhammad Ali wants to say in a veiled language, on the strength of Baha's text, boils down to this : Sir Abbas Effendi exploited his Branch-hood to the best advantage. He usurped the rights of Baha as the Branch in his human personality. He misconceived and misinterpreted the Lord's temple, which is identical with Baha's Kitab-i-Haykal. He erected a tomb-shrine on Mount Carmel which he wrongfully designated as the Lord's temple, the resting-place of Sir Abbas Effendi is the tomb-shrine. Thus Sir Abbas Effendi created himself for himself a false Imam-Zada.

3.3 Rebuttals

Mirza Muhammad Ali states that his rebuttals of the sacred matters dealt with in his Will and Testament derive their authority from Baha's holy texts. His only object was to enlighten the Bahais.

The text sums as follows:

« در این مقام ذکر بعضی مطالب لازم است و این عبد را در اظهار آن مقصودی
جز آگاهی دوستان نیست و آنچه مرقوم میشود به موجب بیانات الهیه است و موافق
آیات ربّانیه و هرکه به انصاف تأمل نماید گواهی دهد که به تصور خود چیزی
نگفته ام و تا مطابق الواح مقدسه نیافته اظهاری ننموده ام باری پس از آنکه امواج
بحر سکون اختیار فرمود به بعضی اذکار انتشار یافت که علت تفرقه آراء و تباین
افکار شده »