

THE MARTYRS

AN OPEN LETTER CONCERNING HOLOCAUST DENIAL

(Compilation of selected historical accounts for a professor of religious history)

"The number of martyrdoms which have taken place in Persia has been estimated at ten thousand. (This estimate is conservative. Many place the number at from twenty to thirty thousand, and some even higher.) Most of these occurred during the early history of the faith, but they have continued, with diminishing frequency, even down to the present time." (M. H. Phelps, *Life and Teachings of 'Abdu'l-Baha*, introduction, p. 36. See also *The Dawn Breakers*, p. 605, Translation Shoghi Effendi).

Historian and human rights activist, Howard Zinn--a person of Jewish descent--makes an important statement concerning the Universal Meaning of these types of holocausts and genocides:

"My point was that the memory of the Jewish Holocaust should not be circled by barbed wire, morally ghettoized, kept isolated from other atrocities in history. To remember what happened to the six million Jews, I said, served no important purpose unless it aroused indignation, anger, action against all atrocities, anywhere in the world.... If the Holocaust is to have any **meaning**, we must transfer our anger to today's brutalities. We must respect the memory of the Jewish Holocaust by refusing to allow atrocities to take place now."

"To build a wall around the uniqueness of the Jewish Holocaust is to abandon the idea that humankind is all one, that we are all-of whatever color, nationality, religion-deserving of equal rights to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. What happened to the Jews under Hitler is unique in its details, but it shares universal characteristics with many other events in human history: the Atlantic slave trade, the genocide against Native Americans, and the injuries and deaths to millions of working people who were victims of the capitalist ethos that put profit before human life.

"In recent years, while paying more and more homage to the Holocaust as a central symbol of man's cruelty to man, we have, by silence and inaction, collaborated in an endless chain of [other] cruelties.

"There have been the massacres of Rwanda, and the starvation in Somalia, with our government watching and doing nothing.

"There were the death squads in Latin America and the decimation of the population of East Timor, with our government actively collaborating. Our churchgoing Christian Presidents, so pious in their references to the genocide against the Jews, kept supplying the instruments of death to the perpetrators of these atrocities."

"My point is not to diminish the experience of the Jewish Holocaust, but to enlarge upon it.

"For Jews, it means to reclaim the tradition of Jewish universal humanism against an Israel-centered nationalism. Or, as Novick puts it, to go back to "that larger social consciousness that

was the hallmark of the American Jewry of my youth." That larger consciousness was displayed in recent years by those Israelis who protested the beating of Palestinians in the Intifada and who demonstrated against the invasion of Lebanon.

"For others, whether Armenians or Native Americans or Africans or Bosnians [or the Babi and Baha'i martyrs], it means to use their own bloody histories not to set themselves against others but **to create a larger solidarity** against the holders of wealth and power, the perpetrators and collaborators of the ongoing horrors of our time." (Howard Zinn. (1999, November). Respecting the Holocaust. *The Progressive Magazine*. Retrieved from <http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Zinn/RespectingHolocaust.html>)

Like Professor Zinn, as an individual person of ethnic Jewish background, I am very familiar with the important type of material verification that researchers must undergo--particularly in the face of the recalcitrant and the denier--to show and document genocide. In the 1990's I put out a call to establish a Universal Human Rights Museum and Holocaust Memorial. The purpose of this is for people to see in one single location a full and unabridged record of man's injustice toward man, so that these types of things will never happen again.

This Memorial is to include, not only the injustices, such as the Killing Fields; slavery in America; the Opium Wars against China; the Jewish Holocaust in WW II; the various witch hunts and infamous trials, etc., but also those documents and moves in history toward equity, fairness, and justice for all the people. Documents such as the International Declaration of Human Rights; the United States Amendment abolishing slavery; and other such public enactments and historical charters that vouchsafe freedom and justice fairly in society in general.

In this way, people would have access to a resource universal education in this important matter: Justice--which is sorely needed today. As of now this plan remains in the works as a potential website. As Zinn says this type of project would bring about Universal Meaning by establishing the creation of a larger solidarity that focuses on all Humankind as One, that is the Oneness of Humanity upheld by Justice for all.

One of the things that makes this project all the more important at this time, is the disintegration and denial of these holocausts and atrocities by the confused bigot and hater over relatively short periods of time, and some even while they are occurring!! Though the facts establishing the truth of these atrocities like the holocaust are evident, Abdu'l-Baha explains: "If there be *justice*, this will be acknowledged; but there are some people who, *even if all the proofs in the world* be adduced before them, still will not *judge justly!*" (*SAQ*, p. 36).

For that reason the foundation of the "International Universal Human Rights Museum and Holocaust Memorial" is especially important at this time in history, prior to the catastrophe which will potentially wipe out the documentation of what has already taken place. When we look at the current government of Iran for example, a systematic re-writing of history to eliminate both the holocaust of the Jewish people as well as that of the Babi and Baha'i martyrs is already underway. As Baha'u'llah's ancestry is of Jewish origin, being from the throne line of King David, the people should be aware of why this type of erosion is taking place, due to the

animosity of certain individuals against the continuation of the Jewish Kingship, passed down in the guardianship of the Baha'i faith.

Now God has allowed racism and the hijacking of religion for a very special purpose. His purpose is that of outwardly distinguishing the true believers and pure of heart, from those who are not in the sight of all people. In the future, all the people will be believers, because of the patient endurance of the people in this day who continually assert without fail, without deviation, and without wavering what is true and to refute the vain and false within our very own culture and within our very own society today. This is the task of, those shining lights, of whom Shoghi Effendi terms the "valiant warrior Baha'is."

FACTS FOR UNIVERSAL EDUCATION

For the Jewish holocaust (the Shoah - *השואה*) in World War II, the standard figures are six million Jews and six to eleven million other peoples and groups for a total of about 11 to 17 million souls. These numbers are so large that their combined magnitude is incomprehensible especially when we think empathically of the magnitude and compassion of any one single life.

Yet, these figures have become politicized and part of holocaust denial.

The truth is that if only 2000 people, or say 200 people, or 2 people or one person (say Jesus or the Bab or Socrates, or some little child killed in rape camp) were rounded up, murdered, imprisoned, and tortured for their ethnic or religious beliefs, at what minimum number, 1, 2, 10, 20? would this not still be a grievous atrocity nor genocide against a people? The answer is there is no minimum number!

"If there be *justice*, this will be acknowledged; but there are some people who, *even if all the proofs in the world* be adduced before them, still will not *judge justly!*" ('Abdu'l-Baha, *SAQ*, p. 36).

Thus the debate is not about numbers. The debate is subterfuge for those people who are against the oneness of humanity and stand as the enemy of God's purpose to unite all the peoples in this day. Their level--that of the bigot, the hater--is simply a loathsome affair, because debating how many actual numbers of African American families were ruined in the 400 years of slavery in the US, or how many Native Americans were displaced from their lands or interred in "camps" in no way diminishes, the immorality of the acts of those who even enslaved one, nor diminishes the cruelty, suffered of any one native American family in the concentration camps in the US called "reservations" that Hitler and the Nazis used as models for their own internment camps (See Zinn, 'People's History' for more).

The deniers today--who by their words and deeds--defend, or make excuses for the perpetrators of the atrocities in fact have the karma of those self-same perpetrators rest upon them. While it may be for the victims of such atrocities, and the families and descendents of those victims to forgive--it is the job of the government to establish justice in these matters, which means to punish and condemn such acts, to prevent future repeats; and to educate the people away from such glaring wrongs. This is the reason that this letter is written and published--not to change the

minds of the unjust--but to forearm the pure in heart with such facts, so that they and their successors to the light should know the truth of these matters.

"If there be *justice*, this will be acknowledged; but there are some people who, *even if all the proofs in the world* be adduced before them, still will not *judge justly!*" ('Abdu'l-Baha, *SAQ*, p. 36).

That said, the original figure of six-million Jews, as a rough estimate, was given by Adolf Eichmann, himself, a Nazi government official of the Gestapo, senior member of the SS, as documented in and reported in the transcripts of both Eichmann's Trial and the Nuremberg Trials. The same case is true of the first official report of the Babi/Baha'i martyrs which was given to the Shah of Persia, Nasr-Din by a high level government official recorded at that exact time by the Iranian court chronicler Mirza Muhammad-Taqi Sipahr (entitled "Lisanu'l-Mulk": "The Tongue of the Kingdom") as **"20,000 souls killed"** (see Mazandarani "Tarikh Zuhur al-Haqq"; and E.G. Browne's translation, *Traveler's Narrative*, pp. 173-192 for more).

These 20,000 souls killed are the 20,000 Baha'i martyrs rubbed out over the very long time period of the reign of Nasr-Din Shah, over 40 years. In addition to the 20,000 Baha'i martyrs killed are 10,000 Babi martyrs killed in the first 9 years (1844-1853). 10,000 plus 20,000 equals a total of 30,000 altogether.

When we look into the Baha'i writings, and his talks and addresses, of the martyrs, 'Abdu'l-Baha states "ten thousand", and "twenty thousand", and in later letters gives the figure "30,000" (Balyuzi, *'Abdu'l-Baha*, p. 4.; 'Abdu'l-Baha, *Ma'ida*, Vol. 5, p. 45). These are the 10,000 Babi martyrs plus the 20,000 Baha'i martyrs for the total of 30,000. However, some have cited these various numbers causing confusion in uninformed the minds. This confusion exists for various reasons, not all worth mentioning, some of which is due to ex-membership and political issues amongst the sans-guardian population of those exposed to the poison of Covenant-breaking "anti-guardian" ideology/theology of the "Hands". For example, in referring to the 10,000 Babi martyrs in the *Traveler's Narrative*, 'Abdu'l-Baha refers to them as "over four thousand." Thus, in the words of Jesus, have these people strained a gnat and swallowed a camel!

This is why their debate is not about numbers, but about their own personal "reasons." For the just, the matter is entirely cleared up by the explicit texts of both 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi. In the Will and Testament on page 4, written by 'Abdu'l-Baha and translated by Shoghi Effendi, it states, in conjunction with the martyrdom of the Bab and Baha'u'llah's own suffering in that first period (1844-1853) before He was cognizant of His Station, that:

"Ten thousand souls have shed streams of their sacred blood in this path, their precious lives they offered in sacrifice unto Him, hastened wrapt in holy ecstasy unto the glorious field of martyrdom, upraised the Standard of God's Faith and writ with their life-blood upon the Tablet of the world the verses of His Divine Unity." (W&T, p. 4)

These are the 10,000 Babi martyrs that lost their lives between the years 1844 and 1853 AD, from the inauguration of the Bab's mission until Baha'u'llah vision in the Siyal-Chal that fateful 9 years sacred and holy period. This is further clarified in *God Passes By*, by Shoghi Effendi on

page xiv, in which Shoghi Effendi states that “above 10,000 heroes laid down their lives” in “nine years [1844-1853] of fierce and relentless contest, whose theatre was the whole of Persia [modern day Iran].” Later in that same book of *God Passes By*, Shoghi writes of the “twenty thousand martyrs” (p. 372) of the “world community [that is, the Baha’is]... consecrated by the sacrifice of no less than twenty-thousand martyrs” (p. 402). This is further confirmed by ‘Abdu’l-Baha in his talk published in the *Star of the West Magazine*, in which he states: “twenty thousand Baha’is” killed in the reign of Nasr Din Shah:

“I was forty years a prisoner until the Young Turks of the Committee of Union and Progress overcame the despotism of Abdul Hamid, dethroned him and proclaimed liberty. Then the Committee of Union and Progress set me free from oppression. Were it not of the Committee of Unity and Progress I should have been in prison until the days of my life were ended. The purport is this:---that Baha’u’llah in prison was able to hoist the banner of peace although two despotic kings [Abdul Hamid and Nasr Din Shah] were His oppressors. The king of Persia **Naser-Ed-Din-Shah had killed twenty thousand Baha’is**. These martyrs in absolute severance and detachment, with the utmost willingness offered up their lives for their faith.” (‘Abdu’l-Baha, June 16, 1912, cf. *Star of the West*, 3(10), p. 23)

Thus these are the 10,000 Babi martyrs and 20,000 Baha’is martyrs which total 30,000, which is that same exact figure given by ‘Abdu’l-Baha as already shown (Balyuzi, *‘Abdu’l-Baha*, p. 4.; ‘Abdu’l-Baha, *Ma’ida*, vol. 5, p. 45). As far as the explicit texts of the writings go this is the matter as it comes down to us through the infallible line of authority from ‘Abdu’l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi. Moreover, ‘Abdu’l-Baha was born in 1844, and was 9 years old in 1853. He was alive when the massacre of the 10,000 Babi martyrs occurred, and lived his entire life during the slaughter of the 20,000 Baha’is. ‘Abdu’l-Baha is himself an eye witness to all these events.

Now, though established and known as fact, some have differed on these historical points. Though the eye witnesses such as Gobineau and other European visitors, as well as the official report of the officer to the Shah, corroborate these findings, some have, for reasons of their own, chosen to reject these first hand and eye witness accounts. One of the reasons for this paucity of intelligent research is that whereas the accounts of famous and well renown martyrs are given, the slaughter of the masses of rank and file believers remained obscure, for the Persians/Iranians of the time, unlike the German's of WW II, did not keep meticulous records and census, tattooing numbers on peoples arms and using IBM computers to keep count of their own kill record into the tens of millions.

Therefore, like the contested numbers of the holocaust Jews, this becomes a detestable and odious subject to say the least. Like the numbers of holocaust Jews, the Baha’is, like the Jews could only at first estimate their own numbers of loss, and were later informed by the facts and figures of the exterminators themselves like Eichmann’s 6 million and the Persian official’s 20,000 count.

Later when the Jewish Holocaust was historically contested or completely denied altogether, and when also Raul Hilberg published his rounded estimates as 5.1 million, this forced scholars such as Martin Gilbert, Lucy Dawidowicz and others to meticulously comb through not only German records, but pre World War II census of European Jewish populations, resulting in figures such

as 5.75 million and 5.934 million, confirming the figure of Eichmann at about 6 million. They did this as compelled by the materialists to substantiate these figures--though these figures come from Eichmann himself as bragging!

These other numbers 5.1, 5.75 and 5.934 millions which corroborates the original 6 million figure of Eichmann still does not reflect the total 8 to 10 million Jews controlled, effected and who also ultimately died by the hands of the Nazi Regime. In making these type of material estimates in genocide, in my personal opinion and experience in looking into slavery in the US, the treatment of the Native Americans, the interment of the Japanese-Americans in World War II, here in the US, as well as the Killing fields in Cambodia, Stalin's massacres, the programs of the Czar, the atrocities in Rwanda, the Bosnian rape camp statistics of the Serbs, these stated numbers, are almost always deflated and too low in such cases as these, and should be stated in the same manner and style as 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi as "above" and "no less than" those minimal estimated figures, for in that way those killed but unaccounted for, as well as those who die later on from the same root cause, are all accounted for as victims of the same evil that effects the goodness of what little bonds of affection, love and, understanding are able to survive in this world at the present time and conditions outside the provisions of the Covenant of Baha'u'llah, the overshadowing shelter of King David's throne as given in the provisions of the sacred Will and Testament of 'Abdu'l-Baha that sets the Jewish Davidic Kingship as the presidents of the Baha'u'llah's true UHJ so that we can recognize the true Universal House of Justice of Baha'u'llah from fakes, frauds and imitations. What will these naysayers, deniers, pseudo-historians, incompetent and recalcitrant say as they are confronted with the actual living throngs of martyred souls themselves--face to face--in the next world, everyone of whose number is given, manifest and established!

"And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellow servants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled." (Rev. 6:9-11)

Now World War II set aside, the Germans were meticulous documenters and filmers of their actions and activities, but the Persians of the 1800's under the Shah were not. Neither do we have pre-holocaust consensus or records of the Babis before the death of the Bab, nor of the Baha'is during reign of Nasr-Din Shah. Further, when the facts were contested in WW II, scholars like Gilbert, Dawidowicz and others not only had access to census and meticulous records before and after the event, but also only a very short span of 40 or 50 years separating their research from the time of the events.

Now, with modern techniques, 150 years separates our days from that of Qadjar Persia. The first hand eye-witness reports in which the repugnance of the European witnesses, such as Gobineau, throwing scrutiny on that regime, so firmly documented the early announced figures estimated at over 30,000, were already begun to be obscured in the 1890's by those with political motives and reasons of their own, even as now the WW II deniers, in these first 40 and 50 years, are poised to attempt to erase the true figures of the WW II holocaust from history.

It doesn't take that much intellect to imagine the situation if the Jews had been an even more oppressed minority as were the true believers during the Heroic Age of the Baha'i Faith. As history is written by the victors, what would be left of the knowledge of the atrocities of World War II, had the Nazis won the war? Probably nothing, for the stated goal was not only to eliminate the people, their culture, and their literature but even their memory, and the memory of their very existence. In the future envisages of the Nazi Third Reich, only a footnote, that the race had been Purified by Hitler, would remain. None of the details of how, when or who, would remain. Those vanquished and destroyed were to be completely erased and forgotten all together. For the most part this is what has occurred to the knowledge and history of the Babi and Baha'i faith in the nation of Iran, by the mainstream population at this time. If the name of Baha'u'llah is known, it is known only vaguely as an outcast of the state. Nothing else remains.

Without a doubt, the Qadjar and Shi'i regimes won out in Persian/Iranian society even unto this day, whereas for all intents and purposes the Nazi regime lost. Therefore, what accounts--like Eichmann's statement of 6 million killed--there does exist concerning the Baha'i martyrs in the official government record of Persia/Iran of over 20,000 given at the time, and the eye witness accounts of the Europeans in that area is blessing for the children to know what in fact did take place. That said, we have these corroboration of the statements given by 'Abdu'l-Baha and Shoghi Effendi completely consistent with the original data and facts which have survived down to this day. Here is compilation of few of the some better known:

Ernest Renan

"For His sake, **thousands of martyrs** flocked to their death. **The great massacre of the Babís at Teheran.** A day, perhaps, unparalleled in the history of the world!" (Ernest Renan, *Les Apôtres [The Apostles]*, London: Watts & Co., 1905. See also Shoghi Effendi *God Passes By*, p. 66)

AUSTRIAN OFFICER'S NARRATIVE

'Some days ago we mentioned the attempt made on the life of the Shah of Persia on the occasion of a hunting-party. The conspirators, as is well known, belonged to the Babís, a religious sect. Concerning this sect and the repressive measures adopted against it, the letter of Austrian Captain von Goumoens lately published in the "Soldier's Friend" (*Soldatenfreund*) contains interesting disclosures, and elucidates to some extent the attempt in question. This letter runs as follows:

"Tihran, August 29, 1852.

"Dear Friend, My last letter of the 20th inst. mentioned the attempt on the King. I will now communicate to you the result of the interrogation to which the two criminals were subjected. In spite of the terrible tortures inflicted, the examination extorted no comprehensive confession; the lips of the fanatics remained closed, even when by means of red-hot pincers and limb-rending screws they sought to discover the chief conspirator....

“But follow me, my friend, you who lay claim to a heart and European ethics, follow me to the unhappy ones who, with gouged-out eyes, must eat, on the scene of the deed, without any sauce, their own amputated ears; or whose teeth are torn out with inhuman violence by the hand of the executioner; or whose bare skulls are simply crushed by blows from a hammer; or where the *bázár* is illuminated with unhappy victims, because on right and left the people dig deep holes in their breasts and shoulders and insert burning wicks in the wounds. I saw some dragged in chains through the *bázár* preceded by a military band, in whom these wicks had burned so deep that now the fat flickered convulsively in the wound like a newly-extinguished lamp.

“Not seldom it happens that the unwearied ingenuity of the Orientals leads to fresh tortures. They will skin the soles of the Babí's feet, soak the wounds in boiling oil, shoe the foot like the hoof of a horse, and compel the victim to run. No cry escaped from the victim's breast; the torment is endured in dark silence by the numbed sensation of the fanatic; now he must run; the body cannot endure what the soul has endured; he falls. Give him the *coup de grâce*! Put him out of his pain! No! The executioner swings the whip, and--I myself have had to witness it--the unhappy victim of hundredfold tortures and runs! This is the beginning of the end. As for the end itself, they hang the scorched and perforated bodies by their hands and feet to a tree head downwards, and now every Persian may try his marksmanship to heart's content from a fixed but not too proximate distance on the noble quarry placed at his disposal. I saw corpses torn by nearly 150 bullets....

“When I read over again what I have written I am overcome by the thought that those who are with you in our dearly beloved Austria may doubt the full truth of the picture, and accuse me of exaggeration. Would to God that I had not lived to see it! But by the duties of my profession I was unhappily often, only too often, a witness of these abominations. At present I never leave my house, in order not to meet with fresh scenes of horror. After their death the Babís are hacked in two and either nailed to the city gate, or cast out into the plain as food for the dogs and jackals. Thus the punishment extends even beyond the limits which bound this bitter world, for Musulmans who are not buried have no right to enter the Prophet's Paradise .

“Since my whole soul revolts against such infamy, against such abominations as recent times, according to the judgment of all, present, I will no longer maintain my connection with the scene of such crimes... .” (He goes on to say that he has already asked for his discharge, but has not yet received an answer.” (cf. E. G. Browne, *Materials for the Study of the Babi Religion*, pp. 267-271; see also *Dawn-Breakers*, p. 605-606 Translation Shoghi Effendi)

Justin Shiel, Queen Victoria 's Envoy in Tehran

“The founder of the sect has been executed at Tabreez. He was killed by a volley of musketry, and his death was on the point of giving his religion a lustre which would have largely increased his proselytes. When the smoke and dust cleared away after the volley, Báb was not to be seen, and the populace proclaimed that he had ascended to the skies. The balls had broken the ropes by which he was bound, but he was dragged [not literally, of course] from the recess where after some search he was discovered and shot. His death, according to the belief of his disciples, will make no difference as Bab must always exist.” (Sir Justin Shiel, Queen Victoria's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary in Tehran, to Lord Palmerstone, the British Secretary

of State for Foreign Affairs, on July 22, 1850 regarding the execution. The letter, can be found in its original form as document F.O. 60/152/88 in the archives of the Foreign Office at the Public Records Office in London . See also John Ferraby, *All Things Made New*).

Compte de Gobineau

“On that day, a spectacle was witnessed in the streets and bazaars of Tihran, which the people can never forget. Even to this very day, it remains the topic of conversation; one still feels a shocking horror which the years have not been able to lessen. The people saw marching, between executioners, children and women with deep holes cut into their flesh in which lighted wicks were inserted. The victims were dragged with ropes and goaded on with whips. Children and women went forth singing this verse: ‘In truth, we come from God and unto Him do we return.’ Their voices were raised triumphant above the deep silence of the crowd, for the citizens of Tihiran were neither mean nor great believers in Islam. When one of the victims fell to the ground and they prodded him up with bayonets, if the loss of blood which dripped from his wounds had left him any strength, he would begin to dance and to cry out with even greater enthusiasm: ‘In truth, we come from God and unto Him do we return!’

“Some of the children expired on the way. The executioners would throw their bodies under the feet of their fathers and sisters, who proudly walked over them without giving it a second thought. When the *cortege* reached the place of execution near the New Gate, the victims were given the choice between life and abjuration of their faith; they were even subjected to every form of intimidation. One of the executioners conceived the idea of saying to a father that, unless he yielded, he would cut the throats of his two sons on his very breast. The sons were quite young, the oldest about fourteen. Covered with blood, their flesh scorched, they were listening stoically to the threats. The father replied, while laying himself down, that he was ready and the older of the boys, claiming a prior right, requested to be the first to die. It may be that the executioner denied him even that last comfort.

“At last, the tragedy was over and night fell upon a heap of formless bodies; the heads were tied in bundles to the posts of justice and the dogs on the outskirts of the city were crowding about. That day won for the Babis a larger number of secret followers than much exhortation could have done.

“As I have said above, the impression caused by the terrifying impassibility of the martyrs was deep and lasting. I have often heard eye witnesses describe the scenes of that fateful day, men close to the government, some even holding important positions. While listening to them, one could easily have believed that they were all Babis, so great was their admiration for the events in which &Islam played so inglorious a part, and so high a conception did they entertain of the resources, the hopes and the means of success of the new religion.” (Comte de Gobineau's "Les Religions et les Philosophies dans l'Asie Centrale," pp. 248-250, cf. *Translation of French Footnotes of the Dawn-Breakers*, E. M. Perigord. See *Dawn Breakers*, p. 613, 614)

THE EXALTED LETTERS

"They drank their fill from draughts of blood and took their sustenance from provisions of grief; inasmuch as Thou didst purpose for them that which was willed by Thee, and ordained upon their fate Thine all-compelling behest in whatsoever thou didst desire.

"Thus, O my best Beloved, clothe them with the garb of patience and constancy, and with the attire of mercy and forbearance; that their eyes may be illumined by Thy new-found bounties and their hearts may be consoled by Thy boundless blessings. Enter them into the rivers of nearness and cities of reunion; and shelter the homeless within the precincts of Thy mercy and under the pleasant shadows of Thy forgiveness and grace. Comfort these bewildered ones in Thy sacred assemblages and give these thirsty ones a taste of the unseen streams of Thy life-giving waters and the preserved wine that is life indeed. Let the breezes of the city of Thy love waft over them, and cause them to enter the everlasting lands of Thy affection; so that they may stray far from all else and draw nigh unto Thee, and busy themselves in the glorification of Thy name and take pleasure in remembrance of Thee. Plant the tree of Thy affection in the luminous fields of their hearts and nurture it with the waters of Thy love, so that its branches may grow, develop, and bear fruit; and so that they may remain steadfast in Thy love, walk upon the land of Thy good pleasure, lay in the cradle of Thy divine presence, traverse the plains of Thy reunion; soar in the firmament of Thy nearness; renounce the tokens of worldly limitations and be ennobled by entering Thy gatherings of divine singleness; and inhale the breezes of unity in the realm of detachment. Thus they may close their eyes to all and open them to Thee, flee from aught else and seek Thy presence.

"Then bestow upon them and upon Thy newly-arrived guest [Ethel May], O my Lord, all that hath been described herein and all that hath been set aside, and everything that belongeth neither to the former nor to the latter.

"The day is soon approaching when Thou shall grant that which is implored of Thee, for such are Thy all-embracing favours that have encompassed all Thy creatures, O my God." (Baha'u'llah, from the Persian, *Hurufat-i- 'Ali'in*)