

1927

12/13

Sitohi Effendi

(Mary Lesch papers, Box 3) **

(H.E.H. Box 8, fol 12-14) *
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10-11/1927

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3/1927

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THE FIVE STEPS

SHOGHI EFFENDI says: Today is the Judgment Day. Today we are being tested as never before. And we are given a freedom of choice such as we have never had before: and in that freedom of choice we are making our own judgment every day. "NOW IS THE ACCEPTED TIME: NOW IS THE DAY OF SALVATION". We must see the ray of light which has entered the Cavern of Self in which we have been living: and we must see and recognize that light in the day and age in which it comes.

SHOGHI EFFENDI stressed the NEED OF PRAYER and MEDITATION, such as we have never before done - an earnest sincere turning of the whole soul toward God; and then he said, "This is the Mystical KEY, we may call it, for the solution of our problems. We all have problems, and we wish help with them, so perhaps we may be able to help them with this magical mystical vision and key. SHOGHI EFFENDI gave it in five sections:-

- (1) When you have a problem. PRAY AND MEDITATE. He did not say. Prayer, alone: but PRAY and MEDITATE.
- (2) Then, he said, DECIDE; and without any doubts, hold your decision.
- (3) Then have a DETERMINATION to CARRY OUT that DECISION.
- (4) The fourth step-, (and not until the fourth step did he put this one in) - Have CONFIDENCE then that the power will flow through you, the gate will open, the right door will be opened for you, the right book, the right message, the right thought, the right principle will be given you, at the right time; Have CONFIDENCE, and the RIGHT THING will come to you in your NEED.
- (5) Then, he said last, ACT. ACT as THOUGH IT HAD ALREADY BEEN ANSWERED. ACT with Tireless, Ceaseless, Energy. And as you act, you, yourself, will become a MAGNET which will attract more power into your being, until you become an UNOBSTRUCTED CHANNEL for the DIVINE POWER TO FLOW THROUGH YOU.

THE TABLET OF AHMAD

SHOGHI EFFENDI talked very beautifully about the TABLET OF AHMAD, and the need of using that Tablet in stress, in calamity, in great need.

Some of the daughters of ABDU'L BAHA and some of the other Believers who are so sweet and radiant and so close to the Teaching of THE MASTER, told many beautiful stories of how they had practiced the reading of the TABLET OF AHMAD in times of distress, and how it had worked out for them in the wonder ways WHEN THEY HAVE PUT THEIR OWN DESIRE, THEIR OWN SELF, OUT OF THE THOUGHT.

So that is another Message I wish to bring to you from Shoghi Effendi - that you learn the TABLET OF AHMAD.

From Notes taken Dec. 13, 1927 from the address of Mrs. Robert L. Moffett, on her return from Haifa.
Published by the N. Y. Spiritual Assembly, for the Believers.

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- (2) Then he said: Decide, and without any doubts, hold your decision.
- (3) Then have a Determination to Carry Out that Decision.
- (4) The fourth step (and not until the fourth step did he put this one in) have Confidence then that the Power will flow through you, the gate will be open, the right door will be opened for you, the right Book, the right message, the right thought, the right principle, will be given to you at the right time. Have Confidence, and the Right Thing will come to you in your need.
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TEACHING SUGGESTIONS

(Notes taken in Haifa by Ruth J. Moffatt, October and November, 1927).

Shoghi Effendi emphasized many times that we should know and study the teachings; also that the friends should memorize passages from the Creative Word.

Definite suggestions for spreading the teachings are; first, to have the love of God in our hearts, and the sincere desire to have the world know the great compelling message of Baha'u'llah.

1. Plan public meetings under Bahai auspices. Leaders of other faiths with sympathetic understanding may be invited to participate.
2. Well trained, clear-minded teachers should give talks to open-minded groups, going to already organized societies and clubs.
3. Exchange teachers often. It is wisest to present the truth to individuals and groups thru many personalities, angles, and varied experiences.
4. Suburban gatherings should be started and nourished by visiting Bahais from nearby assemblies. Care should be taken that those best prepared should be chosen for this important work.
5. The work of the travelling teachers should be followed up immediately when possible to do so. This can best be done by forming classes in science, philosophy, psychology, etc., connected up with comparative religion and sociology.
6. It is important that the friends be well informed and study the vital problems of the world.
7. Discussion after the presentation of the subject is often the most valuable part of the meeting. This however should be carefully controlled by either the teacher or chairman. The timid should be encouraged to ask questions and the loquacious should be tactfully restrained.
8. It is useless to talk to satisfied people. First create in them an interest. Then raise their interest to desire before giving them the Message. Give the full Message to seekers only. In giving the Message individually it is wisest to use material which will lead to a question. If the hearer does not respond with a question, stop. If a question is asked, the answer will lead to the kind of material to use. Mistakes have been made which have seriously impeded the progress of the Cause, due to impulsive or emotional and tactless giving of the message.
9. It is usually best to separate students according to their intelligence and capacity in study.
13. The greatest value in spreading the Cause is the formation of study classes or informal discussion groups in private houses. This method will cause student to think and investigate. There is great need for clear thinking in preparation for teaching.
14. Some of the most effective ways of reaching the masses are illustrated in the Christian Science Movement as an organization (not from a religious point). Their teaching committee prepares the lessons for 10,000 churches as readily as for one. Responsive readings unify the thinking and emotion. They have but one prayer, mass production and instruction standardized thru lessons, modes and uniformity of service, simple methods of unifying teaching at wholesale. Elegant surroundings, simple, impressive, dignified service, effectively reach the people en masse. The Christian Science Movement is an autocracy. The Bahai Movement is a representative democracy. Therefore effective methods should always be considered.
15. Travelling teachers could go about in circuits nourishing already formed Bahai groups and attracting non-Bahai groups or following up other teachers. Well trained speakers should be developed for this purpose. Traveling teachers could repeat the large circuits about twice a year.
16. Go to people. Do not wait for them to come to you. For example, clubs, schools, societies.
17. The best field is among young people, especially college students. But the best speakers and thinkers must be used. One must speak the student's language.

ALLAH 'U' ABHA:

Dear Baha'i friends:

Our beloved Guardian, in Haifa, impressed upon the heart of this maid-servant the value and need of using the Tablet of Ahmad in tests, trials and calamities. He said that the translation by Dr. Esselmont, with the latest corrections by Shoghi Effendi, was the more accurate copy and it would be well for the friends to memorize it.

After returning from the Holy Land, I sent a copy, by request, to the secretaries of all the Assemblies of the United States and Canada. Will the secretary have copies made for each member of his group with the instructions to please memorize it. There is such power in those words. If they are breathed from the heart by all, in addition to being read, there will be a spirit of unity and great uplifting power, such as the friends have never known. This will be their protection in the hour of calamity, which we are told is not far distant.

Our Guardian also impressed upon the minds and hearts of the Chicago pilgrims, who were privileged to be in Haifa in the Fall of 1927, the urgent need of continuing the building of the Mashriqu'l-Adhkar this year, in 1928. Many times he said to the writer, "It must be a monument of the sacrifice of the believers" and "May it be completed ere it is too late" and "This is the most important work at this time." From these remarks we realize that no one has as yet sacrificed as much as he can, nor have we considered it of the first and greatest importance.

Now may we memorize the Tablet of Ahmad and with that spiritual power in our hearts, arise and sacrifice and act for the early completion of the Temple "ere it is too late."

May I repeat at this time the instructions given by our Guardian regarding the compulsory prayers. He said: Baha'u'llah has revealed three Obligatory Prayers. The first, the short one, begins "O God, I testify Thou hast created me to know and to adore Thee." This is to be repeated each noon between twelve and one.

The second is of medium length and begins "O my God, strengthen my hands to take hold of Thy Beck with such steadfastness that the hosts of the world cannot prevent them and protect them, O my Lord." This does not necessitate prostration and kneeling and is to be used three times each day, morning, noon and night.

The third is the long prayer, with prostrations, etc., and it begins "He is the Revealer, the Forgiving, the Merciful! O God of Names, Creator of Heaven! I beg of Thee, by Thine invisible Day-spring, the Exalted, El-Baha, the Most Glorious!" This is to be given once in twenty-four hours.

Baha'u'llah has revealed these three so that one may have perfect freedom to choose the one he prefers. But we should remember that it is a command of God to choose one and use it daily.

Always devotedly, in the Service of the Master,
Mrs. Robert L. Moffett,
4526 Beacon Street,
Chicago, Ill.

(From Notes taken Dec. 13, 1927, from the address of Mrs. Robert L. Moffett, on her return from Haifa.) Published by the N. Y. Spiritual Assembly, for the believers.

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So that is another message I wish to bring to you from Shoghi Effendi- that you learn the Tablet of Ahmad.

As I first saw the Beloved Guardian, it seemed somehow as though I was a long way, yes miles from him yet gazing at him in wonder and astonishment, this lasted it seemed for some hours but I am sure it was only a few moments and as he began to talk to me, I suddenly felt so very near to him and perfectly at home with him.

He asked first of our health and then the query was of individual friends of America, then friends in general and different groups or Assemblies. Then suddenly he turned to me and asked of the colored Baha'is of America. I told him we are not many, meaning as he desired as near the number of each Assembly as I could, not knowing exactly.

He asked for my opinion as to the reason of so few colored in the Cause? I answered: Having so long felt the force of unwelcome among the whites, the chasm is very deep and wide and was very difficult, and having acquired the habit of expecting unfriendliness from the whites, the colored people generally came among the Baha'is looking for short-comings and flaws and soon fell away. Were it possible to get them to read enough to cause them to stop looking at the creatures and look for their guidance to the Teachings alone, they surely would become confirmed believers but there is the trouble. Shoghi Effendi said: The Baha'is should practice so much kindness and manifest so much love that the colored people should be drawn to the Cause. He said: We are not pleased that so few colored

people are in the Cause. The Cause needs them and cannot grow without them. He said: The friends should practice all the Teachings and not just a part, and in that way the colored people would be attracted, this will draw this group in the Cause. The first principle is to abandon all prejudices. How can they hope to do the following if they will not do the first? I told him that to accept this people seemed to be the hardest of all; but that I believed the friends did not altogether mean to be unkind or neglectful but acted rather from force of habit, but in their hearts they meant to be friendly. To this he said: The friends must remove every trace of prejudice from their hearts and bring the colored in. They must remove every idea of superiority from their minds and accept the colored in every way on an equal with himself. In many instances the colored are far superior to the whites and they have not yet had an opportunity to prove themselves. Shoghi Effendi said: When the believers get their hearts free from prejudice, the colored people will come in the Cause, and when the colored people come in and are made welcome then the whites will come flocking in. He said: The white people of

America are watching to see what the Baha'is are going to do with the colored people. When they see the white Baha'is treating the colored Baha'is as themselves then they will believe they are sincere. Then he said: The people of the East are watching to see what the Baha'is of America are going to do with the colored people, and unless the Baha'is remove the prejudice and establish a center where brotherhood and justice is practiced towards the colored people there will be no center to which to turn when the world is in its great turmoil, and the nations will be brought low.

March, 12, 1927.

This A.M. Rooha Khanum (Abdul Baha's daughter) called upon the Western pilgrims and talked beautifully of the American friends and of the Cause. Her heart too is full of a longing to hear of a growing unity between the two races. She ever talked of this race question, and reminds me always of how Abdul Baha manifested in actions towards Mr. Grant and how this contact should be done. How ardently anxious she was during His life time to see this brotherhood practiced.

Afternoon, we visited with the Ladies of the Holy Household, the Greatest Holy Leaf, Monover, Rooha, Zia, Herangese and Herangest. This was a glorious hour, great spiritual fragrance was enjoyed. The Holy Mother talked altogether in Arabic, while Rooha interpreted for her, she spoke much of the love Abdul Baha had for the Western believers, and how He sacrificed to be with them as much as possible, during His life, of His patience in suffering for the sake of the Cause etc.....

Sunday, March 13, 1927.

We went to the Tomb of the Bab and Abdul Baha; the surrounding gardens were in their glory, the morning delightful.....Afternoon we met at the Tomb with the Baha'i ladies, perhaps about two dozen of them. So sweet they were just watching and looking at us, with tender smiles and we knew they were just longing to talk with us, as we with them, but difference of languages barred us. The Beloved chanted as usual and so sweet his voice and marvelous its pathos, one wishes he would chant forever. Home for supper.

Monday, March 14, 1927.

A very pleasant visit with Tuber Khanum, she has just lost her husband and is not well. She talked of the grace and beauty of the Master,

His great love and devotion. She has a splendid daughter and two sons. In the late afternoon Shoghi Effendi arranged for us, an auto drive over Mt. Carmel, such wonderful scenery from the mountain top. We entered Elijahs Cave, and school and other places of interest.

My personal interview with Shoghi Effendi because of his questions was entirely of the "Race Question". He said: I am not pleased that so few colored people have entered the Cause, and that special effort must be made in order that they come. Precaution should be entertained that prospectants of color be prepared and trained in the Teachings before they are invited to a meeting with the friends. They must be trained in the Teachings so they can stand the tests, as the believers are still LIKE babies and are not perfect. He told me to form a class of colored people alone in my own home, and there train them well before allowing them to go to a meeting with the whites.

Question as to the prayer meetings?

Answer: Shoghi Effendi said yes it would be good and very effective were the friends to gather together and engage in prayers, and as many as would participate it would no doubt be of much benefit and bring about great unity and harmony, and great spiritual growth, but this should not be forced upon anyone.

Question: Should a Baha'i die leaving as a last will and testament, a desire to be cremated and it were in the power of the Baha'is to reasonably deny this request, should it be done?

Answer: Shoghi Effendi said undoubtedly by all means do it according to the Teachings. It is most important and will be a favor to the departed one. He spoke of how difficult it is for preachers to turn to the Teachings. Also the use of airplanes to unite the East and the West.

March 27, 1927.

This AM. I was in the presence of the Beloved, Shoghi Effendi, he asked of my comfort.....He then asked lots of questions of the colored people. If they inter-marry with the whites out of the Cause? If they get along well when thus married? If the presence of the colored

people in the Cause, would keep the whites out ~~and~~/etc? Then he said the Master made it clear that the great need of the friends of America is the coming together of the white and colored races, this he says is vital and urgent.

My charge to you is that when you go back to America, tell the friends to look within themselves and there find the reason why so few colored people are in the Cause, and remove this reason, until this is done the Cause cannot grow. If you wish the Cause to grow in America, the thing that keeps the colored people out must be done away with. The life and growth of the Cause depends upon this. England, Russia, and Germany, etc, has each her individual problems and vital need but the American believers must open the doors and let colored people become a part of the Cause, otherwise we shall suffer dispersion. He asked if I had been insistent that the white believers urgently seek colored believers and try to make them feel welcome. I told him I had not tried to insist it upon them, rather for the sake of unity and harmony tried to be patient etc. To this he answered: Racial unity and harmony, perfect co-operation and freedom from racial prejudice is the first principle. How can we hope to keep the following principles if we do not keep the first? Arrive at unity on the principles, but never off or out of them. Should we arrive at unity outside the principles, we are not doing the Teachings. He said; Inter-marriage must take place so that we arrive at the station of oneness. He said; Racial prejudice on the part of the non-believers is a problem, but there should be no racial problem on the part of the believers. He said; There is race prejudice in the hearts and it should be wiped out.

Shoghi Effendi said: There should be a colored believer on all committees, even if one has to be elected several times, owing to the few in number. Shoghi Effendi's wish is that all committees including the Spiritual Assembly should be as universal as could be made.

The last parting with Shoghi Effendi seemed like the deepest death for a few moment, but as we realized the commission he gave us we surrendered and looked with longing hearts towards the time when we shall begin our work with the newer understanding, feeling confident we are resting in the prayers of our Beloved Guardian, supported by the knowledge of his desires, which is no other than the Will of God.

Shoghi Effendi's last words to me: "Be urgent and insistent in pressing this vital truth upon the understanding of the believers. Be forceful, and don't lose courage, I will pray for you, I will pray for you, I will pray for you."

Copied by D.W.G. November 22, 1928.