

1853 or 1863?

A. Our calendar starts from 1844.

Q. How can "forces of heaven and earth be leagued against you" (Tablet of Ahmad). Why heaven?

A. Heaven (refer to the Kitáb-i-Íqán) means religions' powers.

Q. Why reward one hundred martyrs for reciting the Tablet of Ahmad?

A. The aim of prayer is to surrender one's will to the Will of God, and if one is able to do so, that one will have the reward of one hundred martyrs.

Q. Why did Bahá'u'lláh say, "My tongue reciteth what no ear can bear to hear!" (People were with Him in the prison.)

A. When you went to the prison cell in the Citadel of `Akká, did you hear that He was all alone by Himself there?

Q. From page 27 of Citadel of Faith: All holy and divine Manifestations from Abraham until the Seal of the Prophets have lived, migrated to, or traveled through that country (Palestine). Buddha, Zoroaster and Krishna too?

A. Line of Prophets descending from Abraham. There are many other lines of Prophets. Here it refers to the line of Prophets with whom we are familiar and who descended from Abraham.

Q. Why so many references to wine ("unseal the choice wine") when we cannot drink?

A. Figurative way of speech is an art in literature. As wine gives intoxication, so do the words of God. Our spiritual experiences should be expressed in the words which pertain to our physical experiences. There is no other way.

Q. Photographs may be taken of the stars. Is the House [of Justice] interested in photographs of the sky as of May 23, 1844 or April 21, 1863 in Baghdad?

A. If you have any, please send them to me. I am interested in collecting such materials for historical references.

Q. Can the Universal House of Justice do something special for Persia in 1971? It is the 2,500th anniversary of the Peacock Throne.

A. Write to the House. It is not the Peacock Throne. It will be the Persian Empire. The Peacock Throne is only about two centuries old.

Q. Can an escalator be installed in the stairwell at the Wilmette House of Worship? (I know that no elevator may be used.)

A. Ask the National Spiritual Assembly. Such innovations should be adopted by

them after careful consultation.

Q. It is true that you are not allowed to eat after dinner, according to the Aqdas?

A. Absolutely wrong.

Q. Did Shoghi Effendi ever speak about Lourdes (France) or Theresa Neuman of Germany?

A. No! Why should he spend his time in such matters?

Q. Could someone be re-buried after a length of time if increased travel speed would make a new burial plot within the one hour limit? Then why a limit of one hour?

A. Yes.

Q. What happens if you die aboard a plane or boat in mid-ocean?

A. Ask the House.

Q. Is contributing to the Fund in someone's memory emulating masses?

A. You may contribute in memory of people. It is a praiseworthy deed. But the phrase, "emulating the masses" makes the question ambiguous.

Q. Do we believe in capital punishment?

A. What do you mean by that? It involves many things.

Q. Did Bahá'u'lláh say why we should fast if our energy is less in the afternoon and our work is service to God and we [therefore] do less efficient work?

A. We fast, pray, contribute to the funds, etc., because we love Him.

Q. If you miss the Noon Day Prayer, and you are very tired in the evening, should you recite the Long Obligatory Prayer?

A. The Long Prayer can be said at any time one desires.

Q. Who are the twenty-four elders who stand at the latter day? (Twelve for Christ, eighteen Letters of the Living for the Báb, and eighteen for Bahá'u'lláh)?

A. The twenty-four elders: Eighteen Letters of the Living, the Báb Himself, the Afnán who constructed the first Temple in Ishqabád, and four others to be found and announced.

2.

From Joy N. Schmidt, Fort Worth, Texas. In her letter to me dated March 17, 1994, Joy writes that her parents, Gordon and Nancy Dobbins received a letter from Mr. Faizí in the early 60s. She also relates that her father is a third generation Bahá'í who, with her mother, pioneered to Fort Worth in the mid-1950s in an effort to win the

goals of the Ten Year Crusade. They arrived there in 1954 and in 1955 the first Assembly was formed. She was born that same year. She was serving on the same Fort Worth Assembly that was celebrating its 40th year. Her parents are now pioneering in Slovenia. Here is Mr. Faizí's letter to Gordon and Nancy Dobbins dated April 15, 1965, from Bahjí:

My very dear Bahá'í friends. Now it is more than two years that I have beautiful pictures of your two precious daughters with me and whenever I feel like praying, I go to the Shrines, very often with my album of children, and pray. Closing my eyes, with the sight of heart I encircle the world and go to the friends' houses and even visualize the little darlings in their beds. Kiss their angelic faces and give them as much as my feeble and humble power allows me the fragrances of these Holy Spots.

Assure the dear little ones who must be now 14 and 10 of my loving and continued prayers. Tell them how much I love them and how eager I am to meet them in their own homeland. My hope is that they are now wonderful Bahá'í children, know the teachings very well and assist their parents in their pioneering and teaching services in that area.

Enclosed you will find some pressed flowers which have remained in the Shrines and especially prepared by me for my darling little ones. Please give them these souvenirs and hug and kiss them most tenderly on my behalf.

I wish you every happiness and success in the service of our wonderful Faith. The message of our beloved House of Justice will bring light to everybody's heart, strength to their hearts and encouragement to every devoted and steadfast pioneer. May every moment of your dear life and every ounce of your energy be spent in the propagation of Bahá'u'lláh's Cause which is the sole remedy for all the human ailments, is the sincere and ardent prayer of your humble brother. Faizí. P.S. The pressed flowers are for your dear darling children with my love and prayers.

3.

Cary Enoch Reinstein of Kirkland, Washington, kindly shared with me copies of his letters from Mr. Faizí. Mr. Reinstein is a very talented artist and photographer.

Bahá 15, 131 B.E. (March 1975) from Haifa

Dearly loved and always remembered friend. The days and even the moments we spent together in the precincts of the Shrines are very vividly remembered. Such memories give me joy and strength and take me to solitude where I raise my suppliant hands and pray for my dear ones who are suffering, are dispersed in the world and live the life of bitter tests and trials. The slides you showed still govern my feelings and I long for the approach of the day when I can visit you in your studio. It is my earnest hope that when such a blessed hour comes, I will find you solaced, strengthened and consoled. I pray that the divine confirmation pours on you to enable you to serve Him in many different ways. Rest assured, dearly loved and sorely tried brother, that all of us

remember you with all our hearts and earnest wishes. Hoping this humble note will convey to you how much we love you. Humbly, Faizí.

Ridván 132 (April 1975), Haifa

Lack of time and being very late in arrival to Haifa have perhaps made of me an impolite and ungrateful friend. When after nine months traveling in the Western Hemisphere and then Europe, I was so fatigued and exhausted that I had to undergo many treatments. Now I am better and resume working. First of all, I would like to thank you again and again for the three very beautiful colored photographs of the Shrine. They are most wonderful and occupy the most prominent place in a very small room where I seclude myself. You are indeed an artist with your camera. The friends have asked me about an arrangement by which they can order a postcard size or other sizes according to their tastes. I should be most obliged if you would kindly write to me. Thousands of thanks for your noble thoughts and very generous gifts to your humble admirer.
Faizí

May 22, 1975, Haifa.

Some time go after my return from my nine-month trip, I wrote you a letter and as yet have no reply. I am worried about your health, therefore I write again and request you to be so kind as to tell me about your dear self.

I have fixed the three beautiful colored pictures of the Shrine and the Garden of Ridván in a small room of my house. Many of the friends come and appreciate the uniqueness of such artistic reproduction. I pray that you are very busy and also consecrate much of your time in the service of our precious Cause.

At present I am busy preparing lessons for the summer schools of Europe. I hope and pray that I will prove worthy of this invitation. Wherever I go, be sure that you are always in my thoughts and prayers. Hoping that you will feel the warmth of my supplications, I am yours ever truly. Faizí

July 15, 1975, Copenhagen, Denmark.

In the last days of my sojourn in Haifa I had the joy of receiving your photo, beautiful letter and the great news. As I had been over and over again worried about you, the receipt of this much loved letter dispelled the clouds from my aching heart and I feel grateful and happy. As to the three very beautiful photos you sent me and my request to have some more, but not very large size, I would venture to request you to make for me fifty copies, colored and the size of the envelope which carries this letter. I will be extremely honored and happy to pay the amount, whatever you write me, to the Fund in Haifa for the construction of the Universal House of Justice's Seat on Mount Carmel. This, I hope will be approved by you and we can jointly make the hearts of many friends all around the world very happy. I send you the enclosed as the expression of my best wishes for your great event. I hope and pray that both of you will be very happy and, as we say in Persian, "will whiten beard and hair together." Hoping this note will convey to you the amount of joy and love that I feel and

the assurance of prayers for both of you. I am and will remain yours, ever faithfully.

September 1, 1975, Brussels, Luxemburg, Summer School

Dearly loved friends: The good news reached me when I was in the midst of the summer schools in Europe. Now I am at the end of the seventh one and have two days of rest. Therefore I hasten to thank you for your beautiful card, unique in beauty. I pray that you will be happy and, as we say in Persian, will whiten beard and hair together. May the grace of Bahá'u'lláh make every minute of your life together a fountainhead of joy, service to the Cause and servitude to His friends. I remain, yours ever truly.
Faizí.

October 9, 1975

It is always a joy to receive some news from you. You can't imagine how grateful and delighted I am that you are well settled and both of you enjoy to service the Cause which both of you love so dearly, support so courageously, and propagate with all your talent and vigor. Your letter brought me much joy. I am grateful that you left the door open for me to ask you to send me more photos. ...

March 28, 1977, Solomon Islands, Pacific.

My very precious friends. Your dear letter followed me in the East and in the islands of the Pacific and here reached me and made me very happy and grateful. The birth of Nabil was great news. I hope and pray that he will always be under the love, protection and the guidance of Bahá'u'lláh. He, I am sure, will be a great source of joy and hope to you and the friends. How I long to reach California, once in my world trips, and embrace Nabil as hard as he permits. The card is most beautiful. I like it very much and have shown it to many friends in all the islands I passed through. I will surely protect it among my art souvenirs in Haifa and pray you will produce such spiritual beauties which open the eyes, comfort the hearts and solace the eye. I wish you all the best in your career and your services to our precious Cause. This humble note will fly to you from the Pacific Ocean and will carry to you oceans of my love and waves of my supplications. Yours ever in His servitude.
Faizí.

4.

Russell and Gina Garcia, who live in Keri Keri, New Zealand, shared with me a letter they received from Mr. Faizí from Haifa dated March 18, 1977, after they had written a musical script based on his booklet, *The Wonder Lamp*. They did this for the children in their Bahá'í community as part of their weekly children's classes.

My very precious friends. You are the twin stars of my aching heart. Whatever news I hear about your services, your achievements and your honors uplifts my downcast soul.

It was indeed a joy beyond measure to receive your joint letter. The contents made me very happy. Wherever you find one of my published writings, you have the right to do anything with it. I feel sure that you read in between the lines and add spiritual vigor and majesty to every paragraph. I am looking forward with eager eyes and expectant heart to behold the fruit of your artistic enterprise,

Have you seen the little book called Meditation on the Eve of November 4th? This also lends itself to something in the line of your artistic perfection. You are always in my heart, soul and prayers. I wish you every honor and success. Yours, ever humbly, Faizí.

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