

Week 11

18 November 2026 · Paragraphs 246–265

 Materials for this session will be posted here.

Reflections or questions

- What stood out to you in this section?
- Any questions about the passages?
- Were there any words, phrases, or concepts you didn't understand?

Passages

Paragraphs 246–265.

Your notes

¶ 246 Amongst the proofs demonstrating the truth of this Revelation is this, that in every age and Dispensation, whenever the invisible Essence was revealed in the person of His Manifestation, certain souls, obscure and detached from all worldly entanglements, would seek illumination from the Sun of Prophethood and Moon of divine guidance, and would attain unto the divine Presence. For this reason, the divines of the age and those possessed of wealth would scorn and scoff at these people. Even as He hath revealed concerning them that erred: “Then said the chiefs of His people who believed not, ‘We see in Thee but a man like ourselves; and we see not any who have followed Thee except our meanest ones of hasty judgment, nor see we any excellence in you above ourselves: nay, we deem you liars.’”¹⁷² They caviled at those holy Manifestations, and protested saying: “None hath followed you except the abject amongst us, those who are worthy of no attention.” Their aim was to show that no one amongst the learned, the wealthy, and the renowned believed in them. By this and similar proofs they sought to demonstrate the falsity of Him that speaketh naught but the truth.

¶ 247 In this most resplendent Dispensation, however, this most mighty Sovereignty, a number of illumined divines, of men of consummate learning, of doctors of mature wisdom, have attained unto His Court, drunk the cup of His divine Presence, and been invested with the honor of His most excellent favor. They have renounced, for the sake of the Beloved, the world and all that is therein. We will mention the names of some of them, that perchance it may strengthen the fainthearted, and encourage the timorous.

¶ 248 Among them was Mullá Ḥusayn, who became the recipient of the effulgent glory of the Sun of divine Revelation. But for him, God would not have been established upon the seat of His mercy, nor ascended the throne of eternal glory. Among them also was Siyyid Yahyá, that unique and peerless figure of his age, Mullá Muḥammad ‘Alí-i-Zanjání Mullá ‘Alí-i-Bastámí Mullá Sa‘íd-i-Bárfurúshí Mullá Ni‘matu’lláh-i-Mázindarání Mullá Yúsuf-i-Ardibílí Mullá Mihdíy-i-Khu’í Siyyid Ḥusayn-i-Turshízí Mullá Mihdíy-i-Kandí Mullá Báqir Mullá ‘Abdu’l-Khálíq-i-Yazdí Mullá ‘Alí-i-Baraqání and others, well-nigh four hundred in number, whose names are all inscribed upon the “Guarded Tablet” of God.

¶ 249 All these were guided by the light of that Sun of divine Revelation, confessed and acknowledged His truth. Such was their faith, that most of them renounced their substance and kindred, and cleaved to the good-pleasure of the All-Glorious. They laid down their lives for their Well-Beloved, and surrendered their all in His path. Their breasts were made targets for the darts of the enemy, and their heads adorned the spears of the infidel. No land remained which did not drink the blood of these embodiments of detachment, and no sword that did not bruise their necks. Their deeds, alone, testify to the truth of their words. Doth not the testimony of these holy souls, who have so gloriously risen to offer up their lives for their Beloved that the whole world marveled at the manner of their sacrifice, suffice the people of this day? Is it not sufficient witness against the faithlessness of those who for a trifle betrayed their faith, who bartered away immortality for that which perisheth, who gave up the Kawthar of the divine Presence for salty springs, and whose one aim in life is to usurp the property of others? Even as thou dost witness how all of them have busied themselves with the vanities of the world, and have strayed far from Him Who is the Lord, the Most High.

¶ 250 Be fair: Is the testimony of those acceptable and worthy of attention whose deeds agree with their words, whose outward behavior conforms with their inner life? The mind is bewildered at their deeds, and the soul marveleth at their fortitude and bodily endurance. Or is the testimony of these faithless souls who breathe naught but the breath of selfish desire, and who lie imprisoned in the cage of their idle fancies, acceptable? Like the bats of darkness, they lift not their heads from their couch except to pursue the transient things of the world, and find no rest by night except as they labor to advance the aims of their sordid life. Immersed in their selfish schemes, they are oblivious of the divine Decree. In the daytime they strive with all their soul after worldly benefits, and in the night-season their sole occupation is to gratify their carnal desires. By what law or standard could men be justified in cleaving to the denials of such petty-minded souls and in ignoring the faith of them that have renounced, for the sake of the good-pleasure of God, their life and substance, their fame and renown, their reputation and honor?

¶ 251 Were not the happenings of the life of the “Prince of Martyrs”¹⁷³ regarded as the greatest of all events, as the supreme evidence of his truth? Did not the people of old declare those happenings to be unprecedented? Did they not maintain that no manifestation of truth hath ever evinced such constancy, such conspicuous glory? And yet, that episode of his life, commencing as it did in the morning, was brought to a close by the middle of the same day, whereas, these holy lights have, for eighteen years, heroically endured the showers of afflictions which, from every side, have rained upon them. With what love, what devotion, what exultation and holy rapture, they sacrificed their lives in the path of the All-Glorious! To the truth of this all witness. And yet, how can they belittle this Revelation? Hath any age witnessed such momentous happenings? If these companions be not the true strivers after God, who else could be called by this name? Have these companions been seekers after power or glory? Have they ever yearned for riches? Have they cherished any desire except the good-pleasure of God? If these companions, with all their marvelous testimonies and wondrous works, be false, who then is worthy to claim for himself the truth? I swear by God! Their very deeds are a sufficient testimony, and an irrefutable proof unto all the peoples of the earth, were men to ponder in their hearts the mysteries of divine Revelation. “And they who act unjustly shall soon know what lot awaiteth them!”¹⁷⁴

¶ 252 Furthermore, the sign of truth and falsehood is designated and appointed in the Book. By this divinely appointed touchstone, the claims and pretensions of all men must needs be assayed, so that the truthful may be known and distinguished from the imposter. This touchstone is no other than this verse: “Wish for death, if ye are men of truth.”¹⁷⁵ Consider these martyrs of unquestionable sincerity, to whose truthfulness testifieth the explicit text of the Book, and all of whom, as thou hast witnessed, have sacrificed their life, their substance, their wives, their children, their all, and ascended unto the loftiest chambers of Paradise. Is it fair to reject the testimony of these detached and exalted beings to the truth of this preminent and glorious Revelation and to regard as acceptable the denunciations which have been uttered against this resplendent Light by this faithless people, who for gold have forsaken their faith, and who for the sake of leadership have repudiated Him Who is the First Leader of all mankind? This, although their character is now revealed unto all people who have recognized them as those who will in no wise relinquish one jot or one tittle of their temporal authority for the sake of God’s holy Faith, how much less their life, their substance, and the like.

¶ 253 Behold how the divine Touchstone hath, according to the explicit text of the Book, separated and distinguished the true from the false. Notwithstanding, they are still oblivious of this truth, and in the sleep of heedlessness, are pursuing the vanities of the world, and are occupied with thoughts of vain and earthly leadership.

¶ 254 “O Son of Man! Many a day hath passed over thee whilst thou hast busied thyself with thy fancies and idle imaginings. How long art thou to slumber on thy bed? Lift up thine head from slumber, for the Sun hath risen to the zenith; haply it may shine upon thee with the light of beauty.”

¶ 255 Let it be known, however, that none of these doctors and divines to whom we have referred was invested with the rank and dignity of leadership. For well-known and influential leaders of religion, who occupy the seats of authority and exercise the functions of leadership, can in no wise bear allegiance to the Revealer of truth, except whomsoever thy Lord willeth. But for a few, such things have never come to pass. “And few of My servants are the thankful.”¹⁷⁶ Even as in this Dispensation, not one amongst the renowned divines, in the grasp of whose authority were held the reins of the people, hath embraced the Faith. Nay, they have striven against it with such animosity and determination that no ear hath heard and no eye hath seen the like.

¶ 256 The Báb, the Lord, the most exalted—may the life of all be a sacrifice unto Him—hath specifically revealed an Epistle unto the divines of every city, wherein He hath fully set forth the character of the denial and repudiation of each of them. “Wherefore, take ye good heed ye who are men of insight!”¹⁷⁷ By His references to their opposition He intended to invalidate the objections which the people of the Bayán might raise in the day of the manifestation of “Mustagháth,”¹⁷⁸ the day of the Latter Resurrection, claiming that, whereas in the Dispensation of the Bayán a number of divines have embraced the Faith, in this latter Revelation none of these hath recognized His claim. His purpose was to warn the people lest, God forbid, they cling to such foolish thoughts and deprive themselves of the divine Beauty. Yea, these divines to whom We have referred, were mostly unrenowned, and, by the grace of God they were all purged of earthly vanities and free from the trappings of leadership. “Such is the bounty of God; to whom He will He giveth it.”

¶ 257 Another proof and evidence of the truth of this Revelation, which amongst all other proofs shineth as the sun, is the constancy of the eternal Beauty in proclaiming the Faith of God. Though young and tender of age, and though the Cause He revealed was contrary to the desire of all the peoples of earth, both high and low, rich and poor, exalted and abased, king and subject, yet He arose and steadfastly proclaimed it. All have known and heard this. He was afraid of no one; He was regardless of consequences. Could such a thing be made manifest except through the power of a divine Revelation, and the potency of God’s invincible Will? By the righteousness of God! Were any one to entertain so great a Revelation in his heart, the thought of such a declaration would alone confound him! Were the hearts of all men to be crowded into his heart, he would still hesitate to venture upon so awful an enterprise. He could achieve it only by the permission of God, only if the channel of his heart were to be linked with the Source of divine grace, and his soul be assured of the unfailing sustenance of the Almighty. To what, We wonder, do they ascribe so great a daring? Do they accuse Him of folly as they accused the Prophets of old? Or do they maintain that His motive was none other than leadership and the acquisition of earthly riches?

¶ 258 Gracious God! In His Book, which He hath entitled “Qayyúmu’l-Asmá’”—the first, the greatest and mightiest of all books—He prophesied His own martyrdom. In it is this passage: “O thou Remnant of God! I have sacrificed myself wholly for Thee; I have accepted curses for Thy sake; and have yearned for naught but martyrdom in the path of Thy love. Sufficient Witness unto me is God, the Exalted, the Protector, the Ancient of Days!”

¶ 259 Likewise, in His interpretation of the letter “Há’,” He craved martyrdom, saying: “Methinks I heard a Voice calling in my inmost being: ‘Do thou sacrifice the thing which Thou lovest most in the path of God, even as Ḥusayn, peace be upon him, hath offered up his life for My sake.’ And were I not regardful of this inevitable mystery, by Him Who hath my being between His hands, even if all the kings of the earth were to be leagued together they would be powerless to take from me a single letter, how much less can these servants who are worthy of no attention, and who verily are of the outcast ... That all may know the degree of My patience, My resignation, and self-sacrifice in the path of God.”

- ¶ 260 Could the Revealer of such utterance be regarded as walking any way but the way of God, and as having yearned for aught else except His good-pleasure? In this very verse there lieth concealed a breath of detachment, which if it were to be breathed full upon the world, all beings would renounce their lives and sacrifice their souls. Reflect upon the villainous behavior of this generation, and witness their astounding ingratitude. Observe how they have closed their eyes to all this glory, and are abjectly pursuing those foul carcasses from whose bellies ascendeth the cry of the swallowed substance of the faithful. And yet, what unseemly calumnies they have hurled against those Daysprings of Holiness? Thus do We recount unto thee that which the hands of the infidels have wrought, they who, in the Day of Resurrection, have turned their face away from the divine Presence, whom God hath tormented with the fire of their own misbelief, and for whom He hath prepared in the world to come a chastisement which shall devour both their bodies and souls. For these have said: "God is powerless, and His hand of mercy is fettered."
- ¶ 261 Steadfastness in the Faith is a sure testimony and a glorious evidence of the truth. Even as the "Seal of the Prophets" hath said: "Two verses have made Me old." Both these verses are indicative of constancy in the Cause of God. Even as He saith: "Be thou steadfast as thou hast been bidden."¹⁷⁹
- ¶ 262 And now consider how this Sadrih of the Riḍván of God hath, in the prime of youth, risen to proclaim the Cause of God. Behold what steadfastness that Beauty of God hath revealed. The whole world rose to hinder Him, yet it utterly failed. The more severe the persecution they inflicted on that Sadrih of Blessedness, the more His fervor increased, and the brighter burned the flame of His love. All this is evident, and none disputeth its truth. Finally, He surrendered His soul, and winged His flight unto the realms above.
- ¶ 263 And among the evidences of the truth of His manifestation were the ascendancy, the transcendent power, and supremacy which He, the Revealer of being and Manifestation of the Adored, hath, unaided and alone, revealed throughout the world. No sooner had that eternal Beauty revealed Himself in Shíráz, in the year sixty, and rent asunder the veil of concealment, than the signs of the ascendancy, the might, the sovereignty, and power, emanating from that Essence of Essences and Sea of Seas, were manifest in every land. So much so, that from every city there appeared the signs, the evidences, the tokens, the testimonies of that divine Luminary. How many were those pure and kindly hearts which faithfully reflected the light of that eternal Sun, and how manifold the emanations of knowledge from that Ocean of divine wisdom which encompassed all beings! In every city, all the divines and dignitaries rose to hinder and repress them, and girded up the loins of malice, of envy, and tyranny for their suppression. How great the number of those holy souls, those essences of justice, who, accused of tyranny, were put to death! And how many embodiments of purity, who showed forth naught but true knowledge and stainless deeds, suffered an agonizing death! Notwithstanding all this, each of these holy beings, up to his last moment, breathed the Name of God, and soared in the realm of submission and resignation. Such was the potency and transmuting influence which He exercised over them, that they ceased to cherish any desire but His will, and wedded their soul to His remembrance.

¶ 264 Reflect: Who in this world is able to manifest such transcendent power, such pervading influence? All these stainless hearts and sanctified souls have, with absolute resignation, responded to the summons of His decree. Instead of complaining, they rendered thanks unto God, and amidst the darkness of their anguish they revealed naught but radiant acquiescence to His will. It is evident how relentless was the hate, and how bitter the malice and enmity entertained by all the peoples of the earth towards these companions. The persecution and pain they inflicted on these holy and spiritual beings were regarded by them as means unto salvation, prosperity, and everlasting success. Hath the world, since the days of Adam, witnessed such tumult, such violent commotion? Notwithstanding all the torture they suffered, and manifold the afflictions they endured, they became the object of universal opprobrium and execration. Methinks patience was revealed only by virtue of their fortitude, and faithfulness itself was begotten only by their deeds.

¶ 265 Do thou ponder these momentous happenings in thy heart, so that thou mayest apprehend the greatness of this Revelation, and perceive its stupendous glory. Then shall the spirit of faith, through the grace of the Merciful, be breathed into thy being, and thou shalt be established and abide upon the seat of certitude. The one God is My witness! Wert thou to ponder a while, thou wilt recognize that, apart from all these established truths and above-mentioned evidences, the repudiation, cursing, and execration, pronounced by the people of the earth, are in themselves the mightiest proof and the surest testimony of the truth of these heroes of the field of resignation and detachment. Whenever thou dost meditate upon the cavils uttered by all the people, be they divines, learned or ignorant, the firmer and the more steadfast wilt thou grow in the Faith. For whatsoever hath come to pass hath been prophesied by them who are the Mines of divine knowledge, and Recipients of God's eternal law.