

Tiberias. Sea of Galilee.

Syria

May 14th 1914

Dear friends!

The sun of Truth after nineteen hundred yrs hath again appeared from the horizon of Galilee to redeem the sinners and preach the Gospel of Peace "Repent: for the Kingdom of heaven" is in your midst. He is walking by the sea of Galilee bringing back to minds his glorious life of bygone ages! His coming into this most sacred spot, dear and near to the heart of every Christian carries away a deep message of spiritual significance to all those who are trying to imitate the life of Christ. One cannot help but feel the charm and sacredness of this Lake because no person can dispute the fact of its holiness and the authenticity that Christ spent the major portion of the years of his ministry right here in and around this province and often was sailing on this sea. "And Jesus went about all Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness and all manner of disease among ~~the~~ people. And his fame went throughout all Syria." It was in one these mountains surrounding the sea that where

Christ saw "great multitudes of people followed him" "he went up in a mountain" and delivered the wonderful sermon of Beatitudes. Indeed this is a hallowed lake in the glorious Land of Promise, and Divine performance - the peaceful scene of the opening career of the Redeemer, the cradle of his teachings, the country of his disciples; his chosen retreat when he hid himself from his foes, his miracles and his sublime lessons have consecrated these solitudes. The charm of this landscape is felt strongly by every traveller and is reflected in the simple story of the Evangelists. We are carried back to the life on its shores by the parable of the net, by that of the lost sheep, by the image of the sheepfold and the beautiful lesson of the lilies. These flowers, more glorious than Solomon's purple, still abound! And now he has come back again to people ^{once} move these shores with sacred teachings and spiritual healings!

As I write these words, the beautiful words of the "Song of Galilee" are brought to my mind and I write them here so that you may sing them in memory of the spiritual days that I shall live near the Master; and probably our dear Mrs Waite - our Shahnaz - will compose a new song with the new message:-

1. Each gentle dove and sighing bow
That makes the eve so blessed to me
Has something far diviner now
It bears me back to Galilee.

Chorus. O Galilee! sweet Galilee!
Where Jesus loved so much to be,
O Galilee! sweet Galilee!
Come sing thy song again to me!

2. Each flow'ry glen and mossy dell,
Where happy birds in song agree,
Thro' sunny morn the praises tell
Of sights and sights in Galilee.

Chorus: O Galilee! ...

3. And when I read the thrilling lore
Of Him who walked upon the sea,
I long, oh, how I long once more
To follow Him in Galilee!

Chorus: O Galilee! ... "

How I wish all the believers were here now in this Holy Land of Promise to see everything with their own eyes and experience the thrill of holiness and describe the events as they see them! Because I feel myself so unequal to the

task, so weak and little equipped! The desire to share with you all these divine experiences prompts me into many mistakes, the least of them, ^{is an} undue prolixity or diffusiveness but I hope you will be patient with me.

When we arose this morning, the murmur of the water and the twittering of the birds ~~were~~ in our charmed ears. Coming out of my room I happened to look at the Threshold. A piece of stone over which was inscribed some Greek writing was worked into the step. It must have been from one of Greek buildings, the ruins of which abound in this valley ^{and} on both sides of which there are high hills. The stone was broken and defaced but I will copy it here, probably some one may be able to decipher it:-

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Right after breakfast the commander desired to visit a neighbouring village called Bakureh and it was arranged that he ~~may go~~ straight to the station and we will join him there to start for Tiberias. Then followed by a number of the Torastrim farmers, ~~he~~ walked through

the orchard, inquired from them the state of their affairs, ^{and} instructed them to plant more Bananas, peaches, almond, lemon and orange trees. On his return he entered the room in which I slept last night, sat on a chair and spoke as follows:-

"Praise be to God that you have come into this desert and raised the name of God. All these nomads are utterly destitute of the Knowledge of God. They live an animal life and ^{all} their whole thoughts ^{are} centered around their cows, goats and crops. When they come together they speak of nothing else save these things. They know nothing else. Nominally they are Moslems but they are unaware of ^{the ideals of} Mohamad ~~Ideals~~ I am most pleased with you and am satisfied with your conduct. I hope that you may become assisted and confirmed with the Good-pleasure of the Lord This is a good garden, ^{the} ~~your~~ water is ample, your fields are yielding crops and you are living with the utmost unity. May your spiritual perception become keener, your attention to God more complete and your spirituality an example for others! When you are ploughing the ground or sowing the seeds or reaping the harvest, let all your thought and ^{sub}conscious thinking be of God. Your hands and feet ^{will} be working, but your hearts ^{must be} attached to the

Almighty. The body of man is created for this world, but his heart is made for the habitation of the Holy Spirit...
 ... I must leave this morning, because I have much work in Tiberias, besides the sea of Galilee. I came here for your sake, otherwise it would have been impossible. Your genuine love drew me here. I will always pray for you and beg the Blessed Perfection to pour upon you His benedictions." Then he went up into his room and the women entered his presence and listened to his words of wisdom.

When everything was ready for departure he called ^{the friends} again ~~the friends~~ into his room. They all sat on the floor and asked them many questions, such as the ^{planting} ~~plantation~~ of radishes, onions, turnips, cucumbers, beans, tomatoes, potatoes etc and told them how to plant these vegetables ^{that they would} so ~~as to~~ yield a good crop.

The horses were all saddled and the Blessed One was notified. He came down and as he was going to ride, one of the former robber chiefs threw himself before him, supplicating pardon and wishing to repent for all his evil deeds. Other Arabs who had surrounded the Master interceded for him. Looking at him

he said:- "Thy right place is in the prison, because thou hast committed much evil; But now that thou hast come direct to me, and these elders of the village intercede for thee, I will pardon thy offenses. Thou must have the fear of God and engage in some lawful pursuit. Verily I say unto thee, it is better for thee if God is pleased with thee. Forget thy past and do not ^{return} relapse ~~into~~ it. Work in an honest occupation. I will help thee."

We rode back, crossed the river and admired much that was beautiful in the landscape. On the way the Master related two stories ^{of} how, many years ago he supervised his farming in Samreh, how the crop turned out to be phenomenally good, and ^{how} he took the profits to the last farthing to Baha-ollah and he ^{the money} in turn divided ^{amongst} the poor and the needy.

The Commander was waiting for the Master at the station and after a minutes we walked to the pier. The steamer "Sharyah" was waiting for its passengers. No sooner ^{had} I looked at the sea, ^{of Galilee} and observed the Beloved entering the little steamer, hand in hand with the Commander, than the picture of the life of Christ came in my mind and I could not help but utter my

joy in a loud voice. If one really desires to travel around
 the world he must do it with the Master. Because even
 from a material standpoint he is honored, respected
 and ~~loved~~ wherever he goes. He sees with his own eyes
 the glory of the Lord. After an hour the city of Tiberias,
 built right on the Lake of Galilee, was reached. We
 walked through its narrow, dirty streets, to the Hotel Tiberias.
 It is an up-to-date hotel with all the Western conveniences.
 The room No. 17, ^{on the second floor} having a commanding view of the
 Lake was assigned to the Master. I got No. 15 and the
 Commander No. 12. No sooner have we arrived
 than a number of young men in the government's
 service called on the Beloved. He sat in the corridor
 of the Hotel and talked with them. To one of them
 he said: - "I have been to Tiberias before, my last visit
 was 20 yrs ago. Now I see everywhere the signs of
 improvements. There are so many new houses and
 buildings. Then Tiberias consisted of a few hundred
 hovels, dirty and most unsanitary. When I then
 arrived I had a most difficult time to find rooms.
 Finally I got rooms in the house of a Rabbi Samuel,
 then I moved into the house of another Rabbi, Isaac.

This fine hotel was not then built and one could not ^{find} a comfortable room like ^{there} here for a hundred pounds. "Other people came and the Master spoke with ^{all} each, instructing ^{each} all in the lessons of the Kingdom of heaven.

When noon came around, Mr. Grassman, the proprietor of the Hotel, and by the way from Stuttgart, conducted the Master and the rest of us to the dining room. The table which is on the right hand in the upper corner was appointed for us.

In the afternoon a long stream of callers commenced. Sheik Abodossalam, an old man with white beard, the Mafte of the city. Gaernmagam, the governor, the judge and many other officers called on the Master with each one of whom he ^{had} carried along extended conversations. Before sunset we walked behind him on the shore of Galilee. The sea was calm and the sunset behind the hills of Tiberias most heavenly. Just as Christ taught men 1900 yrs ago, in the same manner the Blessed One is spreading the Teachings of Love. "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of Peace and bring glad tidings and good things!" (Romans 10. 15.)