

**Courage**

*'Ali- 'Askar was a merchant in Persia. When he became a Bahá'í, he experienced much hardship at the hands of those who opposed the Faith.*

*Within a short span of time, he had lost all he had. Even so, 'Ali- 'Askar was not dispirited. Seeing that he would not be able to make a living in his homeland, he decided to move to Adrianople, a city in a neighboring country.*

*In Adrianople, though he still had little, he managed to acquire a small amount of merchandise. Before he was able to sell a single item, however, he was attacked by thieves who took everything he had in his possession, leaving him with nothing once again.*

*Not long after, the thieves were arrested, and the great fortune they had acquired was seized. One of the local authorities, dazzled by the riches, came up with an idea to keep the fortune for himself. He called 'Ali- 'Askar to his office and explained.*

*“'Ali- 'Askar,” he said, “these thieves are very rich. In my report to the Government, I wrote that the amount of the theft was great. Therefore you must attend the trial and testify conformably to what I wrote.” This way, the official thought, all of the money would be returned to 'Ali- 'Askar, and the two would split it between themselves.*

*'Ali- 'Askar knew that he could never go along with such a plan. “Your Honor Khan,” he replied, “the stolen goods amounted to very little. How can I report something that is not true? When they question me, I will give the facts exactly as they are. I consider this my duty, and only this.”*

*The official tried again to convince 'Ali- 'Askar. “We have a golden opportunity here,” the official said, “you and I can both profit by it. Don't let such a once-in-a-lifetime chance slip through your hands!”*

*But 'Ali- 'Askar again refused, saying, “Khan, how would I square it with God? Let me be. I shall tell the truth and nothing but the truth.”*

*Now the official became angry. If 'Ali- 'Askar did not go along with his scheme, all his planning would come to naught and he would lose the great fortune now within his grasp. And so he began to threaten 'Ali- 'Askar, hoping he could frighten him into cooperating. “I will jail you,” he said. “I will have you banished; there is not a torment I will spare you.” Then he told 'Ali- 'Askar that, if he did not agree, he would send him back to Persia.*

*'Ali- 'Askar only smiled. “Jinab-i-Khan,” he said, “do with me as you please; I will not turn my back on what is right.”*