

In the name of God, the Almighty, the Unconstrained!

Praise be to Thee, O my God, for having gathered together Thy loved ones to celebrate Thy Most Great Festival, whereon Thou didst shed the splendour of Thy most excellent names upon all who are in heaven and on earth, the Festival whereon the Day-Star of truth hath shone resplendent above the horizon of Thy will and the Ancient King ascended the throne of Thy mercy.

This is the ninth day of Riḍván, O my God, and on this day one of Thy loved ones hath, as a token of his love for Thy Beauty and in the eagerness of his devotion to Thee, invited Him Who is the Manifestation of Thy Self and the Dayspring of Thy glory to leave His room in the prison for another. There he hath spread before Thy presence such of Thy gifts as he hath been able to provide, notwithstanding that the people had plundered all his possessions and the possessions of others among Thy loved ones. O Lord, since Thou hast gathered them round Thee and aided them to attain this surpassing grace, endue them with constancy in Thy Cause and bind their hearts together in such wise that no differences may arise in their midst. Grant, then, that they may guide all people unto this Luminary, the like of which the eye of creation hath never beheld and which standeth peerless in the realms of the seen and the unseen.

Thou well knowest, O Lord, that it hath been the desire of all that circle round Thee to receive Thee during the days of Riḍván. A few have been enabled, in accordance with their means, to attain this honour, while others, through its want, have been prevented therefrom. These have contented themselves with passing round in white vessels that crimson-coloured wine that is brewed from the leaves of China.¹ I beseech Thee, O my God, by Thy Word which Thou hast made to be the lodestone of the hearts and souls of men, the Word whereby Thou hast drawn Thy servants unto the heaven of Thy loving-kindness and the horizon of Thy grace and bounty, to accept from the former all that they have accomplished in Thy path and to ordain for the latter the recompense of whatsoever they had purposed to accomplish. Thou, verily, art the Lord of bounty and generosity, of grace and glory. O Lord, help certain souls among them to know their own selves and to restrain their tongues, lest they utter that which would abase their stations and bring their works to naught. Thou, verily, hast power over all things.

Thou hearest, O Lord, the lamentations of the sincere amongst Thy loved ones who were hindered from meeting Thee during these days, days which Thou hast ordained as a festival unto Thy people and as a treasure and honour unto the inhabitants of Thy realm Accept from them, O Lord, that which they have purposed in their love for Thee, and ordain for each and

¹ A reference to tea.

every one of them the recompense of such as have attained unto every good Thou hast in store. Thou, verily, hast power over all things.

Look Thou moreover, O my God, with the glances of the eye of Thy mercy, upon Thy loved ones who are scattered in the land of Há.² They have tarried there ever since they were prevented from seeking shelter beneath the shade of the Tree of Thy oneness. O Lord, deny them not the things Thou dost possess. Verily, Thou art the Ruler of the heavens and of the earth. No God is there but Thee, the Almighty, the All-Wise. Praise be to Thee, O Lord of the worlds and Desire of all them that have recognized Thee!

The glory of Thy might beareth me witness, O my God! It behoveth all to lay down their lives for the sake of Thine ear that heareth the cries of Thine ardent lovers in every land and the sighs of Thy friends who suffer at the hands of Thine enemies. Verily, the voice of their lamentation hath been raised on account of their love for Thee, and their hearts are consumed with the fire of separation in Thy days. May my soul be a ransom for Thy long-suffering, O Countenance of glory, and may my spirit be a sacrifice for Thy forbearance, O Thou in Whose hand is the kingdom of earth and heaven!

I swear by Thy glory, O Beloved of them that yearn after Thee and Desire of those who cherish Thy love! Were any man of insight to press upon this holy Tablet, he would see the blood of my heart flowing from it, a blood that hath melted for the love of Thee and of those who have been hindered from beholding Thy face after having directed their steps towards Thee and having come to abide within the city or its precincts. May my entire being be offered up as a sacrifice for Thy patience, O Lord of might and power! May my soul be a ransom for Thy forbearance, O Thou the fear of Whose wrath causeth the hearts of the dwellers of the kingdom of names to tremble!

Praise be to Thee, O solace of the hearts of the people of Bahá! I testify, O my God, that none besides Thee can fathom Thine inscrutable wisdom or apprehend the truths and mysteries enshrined in all that hath proceeded from the manifold tokens of Thy power and the manifestations of Thy will. I entreat Thee moreover, O my God, to graciously enable my loved ones to show their hospitality unto Thee through their character and their conduct, that the heavenly table of Thy loving-kindness may thereby be spread before all Thy servants and that all the peoples of the world may gather round it. This, verily, is the true meaning of offering hospitality unto one's fellow men. Thy might and Thy power are, verily, equal to all things. Praise be to Thee, O Lord of the worlds, Thou Whose power embraceth the heavens and the earth!

² Haifa.

