

The day-star of words, dawning above the horizon of the utterance of Him Who is the Lord of all names and attributes, hath, at this most blessed of hours, shone forth in all truth with the splendours of the light of God. The spirit of understanding, flowing from the Pen of the All-Glorious, hath, by virtue of His grace, been conferred upon all created things. The mystery of all mysteries, emerging from behind the veils of concealment, hath, in very truth, been revealed to the righteous, as bidden by God, the Almighty, the Unconstrained.

God, the Most Powerful, the Most Exalted, the Most Great, addresseth the holy Beings created through the Primal Word that proceeded from His mouth, and beyond them the Concourse on high, and beyond them those whom He hath sanctified above the comprehension of all who are on earth and in heaven and whom He hath raised up through His hidden and inscrutable Will, saying: "Rejoice in your very souls, for the most auspicious time hath come; and the Hour hath struck round which revolve all the other hours foretold in the Tablets of God, the Almighty, the All-Glorious, the Most Merciful; and the hidden Morn hath broken forth, in this treasured Name, from the dayspring of divinity, shedding its radiance upon all that hath been and all that shall be." Blessed be the Lord of all bounty, the source of this supernal grace!

The promised Day of God is come! He Who is the Manifestation of the Adored One hath been established upon the throne of His name, the All-Loving, and the sun of His bounty hath cast its rays upon the seeing and seen alike. Wherefore renounce ye, O denizens of the realms of limitation, that which ye possess, adorn your temples with His glorious vesture, and behold with untainted vision Him Who is the luminous Beauty of God seated upon the throne of glory in His transcendent, His almighty and all-subduing sovereignty. All praise be to the Best-Beloved, Who hath revealed His hidden beauty with such manifest authority!

All days have attained their consummation in this most august of days, and all hours in this noblest of hours, and the Unseen hath willed to confer every grace upon the inmates of earth and heaven, to establish, before all who are in the kingdoms of revelation and creation, the Manifestation of God and His loftiness, and the sovereignty of God and His grandeur, that His favour might be made complete unto His servants and His bounty fulfilled unto His creation. And yet, when once He appeared, the eyes of all who had awaited Him were dazzled, save for those whom His might had protected and from whose sight He had lifted all worldly veils. Blessed, then, be He Who hath been made manifest through the power of truth in this wondrous, this shining vesture!

And when the appointed hour of His Revelation struck on this promised Day, the veils of destiny were rent asunder and the divine decree was fulfilled with the departure of the Luminary of the heaven of eternity from the city of Baghdád. This came to pass by reason of what the hands of the malicious had wrought against this Light—a Light that hath outshone every other in its sacred and wondrous splendour. Blessed, then, be He Who hath sent down these twin Revelations through His most great, His most mighty sovereignty!

At the advent of this Manifestation the realities of all created things were filled with joy, and all seized the cup of ecstasy with the hands of longing and rapture and drank thereof the choicest wine for love of this Beauty—a Beauty that hath appeared through the power of truth, arrayed with the ornament of God, the Sovereign, the Just, the All-Wise. Blessed, then, be He Who, through this Revelation, hath attracted the hearts of the well-favoured of the Lord!

Say: This is the Day for which the Pen of the Most High hath ordained no peer, and whose like the denizens of the Concourse on high and the realities of the Prophets and Messengers of God have never attained. Blessed, then, be He Who hath made manifest this hallowed and sacred, this mighty and wondrous Day!

This is the Day whereon the pillars of the Throne trembled in their yearning for God to establish Himself thereon, the Day whereon the foundations of the most lofty Seat were stirred into motion. Blessed, then, be God, the Source of this rapture that hath seized the entire creation!

This is the Day whereon the Sun of Beauty dawned above the horizon of the countenance of God, the Most Exalted, the Most Great, and the clouds of bounty rained down, and the trees of Paradise yielded such fruits as God hath apportioned to them that turn unto Him with radiant hearts in this Dispensation. Blessed, then, be God, Who hath ordained this surpassing grace!

This is the Day whereon the spirits departed from their bodies in their eagerness to behold the unveiled countenance of the Ancient Beauty. Blessed, then, be the One Who hath manifested this mighty Day!

This is the Day whereon the Most Great Spirit was embodied in the most comely of forms, and, proceeding from the Realm on high, approached the Scene of transcendent glory with such radiance as to delight the Maid of Heaven, until she paused, suspended in the air before Our presence, with such an adorning as to seize with longing the hearts of the Messengers of God. Blessed, then, be God, Who hath created this noble angel!

Thereupon the inmates of Paradise, and beyond them the inhabitants of the retreats of holiness and the realms of communion, and beyond them they that dwell within the habitations of heaven and they that abide beneath the tabernacle of concealment, stepped forth one and all from their lofty mansions, and, conversing in hushed tones, apprised one another of that which had come to pass upon the earth. It was as though the Ancient King had revealed Himself unto Himself, and then, with undisputed sovereignty, unto His servants and His creatures in the realm of creation. Blessed, then, be God, Who bringeth forth whatsoever He pleaseth through the potency of His all-compelling command!

Then the Most Great Spirit raised a call that resounded through the entire creation, saying: “Solaced be your eyes, O ye inhabitants of earth and heaven, O ye manifestations of the divine names and attributes, and O ye who are immersed beneath the oceans of grandeur that lie beyond

the worlds of intimation and allusion! This is the Day whereon God Himself, the Most Exalted, the Most High, through His own sacred and glorious Self, beareth round unto every soul, high and low alike, the cup of nearness and reunion." Blessed, then, be God, Who hath revealed Himself in all His manifold grace on this greatest of all days!

This is the Day whereon the most grievous veil was torn asunder and the Scene of transcendent purity was made manifest; the Day whereon the face of God smiled with the joy of reunion, and the gates of His presence were flung open to the embodiments of His beauty and majesty and to them that had pierced the veils of glory through the power born of God, the Almighty, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise; the Day whereon all things visible and invisible cried out: "Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!"

Whereupon the Most Great Spirit was summoned to silence, and the rapture of God seized the inhabitants of the cities of eternity, the inmates of the crimson chambers, and the dwellers of the kingdom of names. One and all they descended from their habitations until they stood betwixt earth and heaven, with utmost humility and submissiveness, before His Countenance. Blessed, then, be God, Who hath made manifest this resistless, this all-glorious and transcendent Cause!

Then were their voices lifted up in praise and exultation on this glorious Day, a Day whose radiance deriveth not from the sun and its rays but from the effulgent light of the Countenance of God, the King, the Exalted, the All-Bountiful. Blessed, then, be He Who hath caused it to appear through the power of truth and Who hath resurrected therein the souls of all humankind!

And then another herald called out from the Scene of transcendent glory: "By God! This is the Day whereon the veils of contention were torn asunder, and the breezes of unity were wafted, and the Lord of creation appeared, invested with manifest sovereignty and riding upon the clouds of grandeur on this, His promised Day." Blessed, then, be God, Who hath descended in truth from the heaven of sublime holiness!

This is the Day whereon fire and water were joined together as one, and the veils were removed from the face of all mysteries, inasmuch as the Beauty of the Unconstrained came forth arrayed in the raiment of His own Self, the Help in Peril, the Almighty, the Incomparable. All glory be to this Day whose advent hath cheered the eyes of the well-favoured of God!

When that joy born of God had taken hold of all else besides Him, the Most Great Spirit called out once more, proclaiming: "O ye dwellers of the kingdoms of earth and heaven! O ye denizens of the realms of revelation and creation! Blessed are your ears, for they have hearkened unto the verses of nearness and reunion. Hear now the tidings of remoteness and separation, for the Luminary of the world hath purposed to depart from the land of 'Irâq, in accordance with the firm covenant that hath been set forth in the Scriptures of God, the All-Powerful, the All-Knowing, the All-Wise."

At this announcement the dwellers of earth and heaven were filled with dismay. Such was their weeping and wailing that they fell prostrate upon the dust, consumed with sorrow. How strange that grievous and sore-trying separation! All things visible and invisible were bewildered by this call. Such was their plight that the letter "B" became oblivious of the letter "E", and the lovers forsook the face of their Beloved, the Almighty, the All-Praised. How woeful was that manifest and irrevocable decree!

When matters came to such a pass, the Ancient Beauty bestirred Himself, and all things were inwardly and outwardly set in motion. Then He arose, and through His arising the Most Great Resurrection was ushered in betwixt earth and heaven. Whereupon the Spirit called out once again, before His presence: "O Isráfil!<sup>1</sup> By the righteousness of God, thou wert created for this day. Wherefore, sound thy trumpet to proclaim the advent of this Manifestation, that every mouldering bone may be quickened thereby!" As bidden, the angel sounded his trumpet, causing all who dwell in heaven and on earth to swoon away. Then he sounded his trumpet anew; they arose and, fixing their gaze upon this glorious Vision, cried out: "Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!"

The Ancient Beauty stepped forth, while the Kingdom of Revelation preceded Him and the Heaven of divine Inspiration followed in His wake. On His right strode the Realm of Command and on His left marched the hosts of the well-favoured ones. All glory be to this manifest and wondrous Cause!

And when He reached the courtyard of the House, the concourse of the realm of holiness prostrated themselves at His feet, and the foundations of the House trembled in their separation from God, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Most Exalted. The inhabitants of every city cried out, and the hearts of them that circle round God were sorely shaken. How grievous that separation which caused the very pillars of the world to crumble!

Upon hearing the lamentations of the inhabitants of the realm of dust, the Beauty of the All-Beloved lingered a moment, and the Eye of majesty wept sore at their weeping. Indeed, the sighs of His loved ones caused His heart to swell with such grief that none in the heavens or on the earth could bear its weight.

He proceeded until He reached the concealing veil, and there at His feet He beheld a child that had removed itself from its mother's breast. And this infant clung to the hem of His robe so earnestly and besought Him in such piteous tones to stay, that the dust of sorrow shrouded the face of every perceiving soul and the winds of anguish blew upon the entire creation. How heavy the burden of grief that clouded the countenance of the sincere! Were it not for the protection of God, the seven heavens would at that moment have been cleft asunder, and the earth would have swallowed up all that dwell upon it, and every lofty peak would have been reduced to dust.

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<sup>1</sup> The angel who will sound the trumpet on the Day of Resurrection.

The Hand of Power then parted the veil of grandeur, whence the Beauty of the All-Glorious emerged with supreme sovereignty. When He Who is the Self of God, the Almighty, the All-Bountiful, purposed to pass through the gate, the Most Great Spirit made its final proclamation: "By God! The Well-Beloved of the worlds hath departed from His House by reason of what the hands of the oppressors have wrought."

He then wept within Himself with such a weeping that the dwellers of earth and heaven, and those suspended in the air before Him, and those circling round the Countenance of grandeur, wept with Him. And He spoke unto them, saying: "Know ye that in such a departure on the very Day of Our Appearance there are signs and tokens for them that understand. Haply, by reason of Our departure on this most sublime and wondrous Day, the peoples of earth and heaven may emerge from behind the veils of self and passion; draw nigh unto God, the Most Exalted, the All-Glorious; and become detached from whatsoever He hath created or ordained in this world. This is that which God had purposed for them as a bounty from His presence. He, verily, is the All-Bountiful, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Generous." Blessed, then, be God, the source of this most manifest, this most exalted bestowal!

The King of Eternity went forth, flanked by the hosts of the seen and the unseen, with His gaze fixed upon the court of the divine decree. Before Him arose the sighs of His lovers, whilst behind Him could be heard the lamentations of them that yearn after Him. When He reached the banks of the river, He parted from His loved ones, and it was as though the very souls of those devoted servants had parted from their bodies. But He exhorted them to patience and fortitude, and summoned them to the fear of God, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Unconstrained. And then, crossing the river, He entered the Garden of Ridván, wherein He ascended the throne of His wondrous sovereignty. Blessed, then, be the All-Bountiful, the Source of this all-encompassing grace!

Once seated on His throne, the Ancient Beauty shed the splendour of His name, the Self-Subsisting, upon all things, so as to fulfil that which had been recorded by the Supreme Pen at the bidding of God, the Most Exalted, the Most High. Then He cast the light of His name, the All-Possessing, upon all things seen and unseen; and of His name, the Most Manifest, upon all that is mentioned and all that is concealed; and of His name, the Most Great, upon the embodiments of eternity and all other peoples; and of His name, the All-Knowing, upon the exponents of the names of God. Well is it with the one who hath turned towards that which He hath revealed through His unfailing grace on this most august Day. How glorious was His assumption of that seat of majesty, through which the hearts of them that enjoy near access to Him were assured, and the souls of them that have recognized Him drew nigh, and the faces of them that have turned towards Him were illumined, and the spirits of them that have fixed their gaze upon Him were sanctified, and the eyes of the Concours on high were cheered, and the tongues of all things, visible and invisible, were unloosed in praise of God, the Sovereign Lord,

the Mighty, the Gracious! Sweet indeed was that heavenly fragrance through which the musk of hidden meanings was scattered throughout the worlds!

The Ancient Beauty's ascent upon His throne took place at the very moment the people arose to offer the afternoon prayer unto God, the Almighty, the Beauteous. Even in this there are signs for those who are well assured, evidences for them that discern, and allusions for such as have been endowed with insight. The Beauty of the All-Merciful tarried in the Garden of Ridván for twelve days, during which the hosts of the Concourse on high, the well-favoured angels of God, and the souls of His Messengers circled day and night round the Tabernacle of grandeur and the Pavilion of inviolable sanctity, guarding and protecting the people of God from the hosts of the Evil One. Blessed, then, be God, Who manifested this incomparable, this glorious station!

During every moment of those days, the inmates of the chambers of Paradise descended from on high, bearing chalices brimming over with the living waters of revelation and cups overflowing with the choice wine of holiness, which they proffered unto the dwellers of the pavilion of glory and the inmates of the tabernacle of resplendent majesty. Blessed, then, be God for this most exalted, this all-encompassing grace!

And when the appointed time of tarrying was fulfilled and the decree of departure was received, the Beauty of the All-Merciful arose and went out from the Ridván Garden riding upon the finest stallion. Blessed, then, be the All-Glorious, Who appeared in the world of creation with a sovereignty that transcendeth the heavens and the earth!

As He departed, a cry of sorrow ascended from the garden, and its trees, and leaves, and fruits, and walls, and air, and ground, and pavilion, while the dwellers of the deserts and the wilderness, and even the very dunes and the dust of the earth, rejoiced at His approach.

Thus did the Beauty of the All-Glorious establish Himself upon the lofty heights of eternity, inasmuch as His gaze was fixed upon the decree which the Finger of God, the Most Exalted, the Most Glorious, had inscribed upon the blessed and snow-white Tablet. And thus do We relate unto you the account of the day of Our Manifestation and the circumstances of Our banishment by reason of the machinations of such seditious souls as had disbelieved in and joined partners with God, the All-Powerful, the Almighty, the Most Bountiful.