

LAWH-I-GHULAMU'L-KHULD

(TABLET OF THE IMMORTAL YOUTH)

This is a remembrance of that which was revealed in the year sixty in the days of God, the Almighty, the Help in Peril, the All-Glorious, the All-Knowing.

Lo, the gates of Paradise were unlocked, and the hallowed Youth came forth bearing a serpent plain.¹ Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with crystal waters.

Upon His face was a veil woven by the fingers of might and power. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty name.

Upon His brow there shone a beauteous crown, which cast its splendour upon all who are in heaven and all who are on earth. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.

Upon His shoulders there fell the locks of the spirit, like unto black musk upon white and lustrous pearls. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a transcendent cause.

On His right hand was a ring adorned with a pure and blessed gem. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty spirit.

Upon it was graven, in a secret and ancient script: "By God! A most noble Angel is this."² And the hearts of the inmates of the eternal realm cried out: "Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with an ancient light."

Upon His right cheek was a mark whose sight caused every man of understanding to waver in his faith. And they that dwell behind the veil of the Unseen exclaimed: "Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty secret."

¹ See Qur'an 7:107.

² Cf. Qur'an 12:31.

This is the Point from which the knowledge of the former and the latter generations hath been unfolded. And the denizens of the Kingdom intoned: "Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty knowledge."

This, verily, is the Horseman of the Spirit Who circleth round the fount of everlasting life. And they that lie concealed in the retreats of the highest heaven cried out: "Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty unveiling."

He descended from the tabernacle of beauty till He stood, even as the sun in the midmost heaven, arrayed with a beauty at once peerless and transcendent. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with the most joyful tidings!

Standing in the midmost heaven, He shone forth like unto the sun in its meridian splendour, illumining the seat of divine beauty with His mighty Name. Whereupon the Crier cried out: "Rejoice! This is the Beauty of the Unseen, come with a mighty spirit."

And the Maids of Heaven cried out from their celestial chambers: "Hallowed be the Lord, the most excellent of all creators!" And the nightingale sang sweetly: "Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, Whose like the eyes of the favoured ones of Heaven have never beheld."

And lo, the gates of Paradise were unlocked a second time with the key of His Great Name. "Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty name."

And the Maid of beauty shone forth even as the dawning sun above the horizon of a resplendent morn. Rejoice! This is the divine Maiden, come with surpassing beauty.

She came forth with such adorning as to seize with longing desire the minds of them that are nigh unto God. Rejoice! This is the Maid of Heaven, come with alluring charm.

Descending from the chambers of eternity, she sang in accents that entranced the souls of the sincere. Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with a mighty secret.

Suspended in the air, she let fall a single lock of her hair from beneath her luminous veil— Rejoice! This is the Maid of Heaven, come with a wondrous spirit.

Shedding the fragrance of that lock upon all creation. Whereupon the faces of the holy ones grew pale and the hearts of the ardent lovers were filled with the blood of anguish. Rejoice! This is the Maid of Heaven, come with the sweetest fragrance.

By God! Whosoever closeth his eyes to her beauty hath fallen prey to grave deception and manifest error. Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with a shining light.

She turned, and round her circled the inhabitants of both this world and the world to come. Rejoice! This is the Maid of Heaven, come with a mighty dispensation.

She advanced, arrayed with a rare and glorious adorning, till she stood face to face before the Youth. Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with enchanting grace.

From beneath her veil she drew forth her hand, golden tinged as a sunbeam falling upon the face of a stainless mirror. Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with a resplendent adorning.

Her incomparable ruby fingers seized the hem of the veil that hid the face of the Youth— Rejoice! This is the immortal Beauty, come with a mighty glance.

And drew it back, whereupon the pillars of the Throne on high were made to tremble. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.

Then did the spirits of all created things part from their bodies. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.

And the inmates of Paradise rent their garments asunder as they caught a lightning glimpse of His ancient and shining countenance. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with an effulgent light.

At that moment the Voice of the Eternal was heard from beyond the veil of clouds with a sweet and enchanting call. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty enchantment.

And from the source of God's inscrutable decree the Tongue of the Unseen proclaimed: "By God! The like of this Youth the eyes of the former generations have never beheld." Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.

And the maids of holiness cried out from the chambers of exalted dominion. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with manifest sovereignty.

By God! This is that Youth Whose beauty is the ardent desire of the celestial Concourse. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.

Then did the Youth lift up His head to the concourse of heavenly angels—Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty spirit.

And gave voice to a single word, whereupon the denizens of heaven arose, one and all, to a new life. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty trumpet blast.

He looked then upon the inhabitants of the earth with a wondrous glance. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty glance.

And with that glance He gathered them together each and all. Rejoice! This is the immortal Youth, come with a mighty cause.

With another look He signalled to a chosen few, then repaired to His habitation in the everlasting Paradise. And this, truly, is a mighty cause!

The Herald of Eternity proclaimeth from his cloud-wrapped throne: O ye that wait expectant in the vale of patience and fidelity! O ye that long to soar in the atmosphere of nearness and reunion! The celestial Youth, hidden ere now within the inviolable treasuries of God, hath appeared, even as the Sun of Reality and the Eternal Spirit, from the Dawning-Place of changeless splendour, adorned with the ornament of the Almighty and the beauty of the All-Praised. He hath rescued all who are in heaven and on earth from the perils of death and extinction, clothed them in the garment of true and everlasting existence, and bestowed upon them a new life.

That concealed Word upon which the souls of all the Messengers of God and His Chosen Ones have ever depended hath manifested itself out of the invisible world into the visible plane. No sooner had this hidden Word shone forth from the Realm of inmost being and absolute singleness to illumine the peoples of the earth than a breeze of mercy wafted therefrom, purifying all things from the stench of sin and arraying the countless forms of existence and the reality of man with the vesture of forgiveness. So great was the wondrous grace which pervaded all things that through the utterance of the letters "B" and "E" the gems that lay hid within the repositories of this contingent world were brought forth and made manifest. Thus were the seen and the unseen joined in one garment, and the hidden and the manifest clothed in a single robe; thus did utter nothingness attain the realm of eternity, and pure evanescence gain admittance into the court of everlasting life.

Wherefore, O ye lovers of the beauty of the All-Glorious! O ye that ardently seek the court of the presence of the Almighty! This is the day of nearness and reunion, not the time for contention and idle words. If ye be sincere lovers, behold the beauty of the Best-Beloved shining clear and resplendent as the true morn. It behoveth you to be free from all attachment, whether to yourselves or to others; nay, ye should renounce existence and non-existence, light and darkness, glory and abasement alike. Sever your hearts from all transitory things, from all idle fancies and vain imaginings, that ye may, pure and unsullied, enter the realm of the spirit and partake with radiant hearts of the splendours of everlasting holiness.

O friends! The wine of eternal life is flowing. O lovers! The face of the Beloved is unveiled and unconcealed. O companions! The fire of the Sinai of love is burning bright and resplendent. Cast off the burden of love for this world and every attachment thereto, and, even as luminous,

heavenly birds, soar in the atmosphere of the celestial Paradise and wing your flight to the everlasting nest. For devoid of this, life itself hath no worth, and bereft of the Beloved, the heart is of no account.

Yea, the moth-like lovers of the All-Glorious at every instant offer up their lives round the consuming flame of the Friend, occupying themselves with naught save Him. Yet not every bird can aspire to such heights. God, verily, guideth whom He willeth unto His mighty and exalted path.

Thus do We bestow upon the dwellers of the mystic realm that which shall draw them nigh unto the right hand of everlasting life and enable them to attain unto that station which hath been upraised in the heaven of holiness.