

All praise be to Thee, O Lord, my God! I know not how to sing Thy praise, how to describe Thy glory, how to call upon Thy Name. If I call upon Thee by Thy Name, the All-Possessing, I am compelled to recognize that He Who holdeth in His hand the immediate destinies of all created things is but a vassal dependent upon Thee, and is the creation of but a word proceeding from Thy mouth. And if I proclaim Thee by the name of Him Who is the All-Compelling, I readily discover that He is but a suppliant fallen upon the dust, awe-stricken by Thy dreadful might, Thy sovereignty and power. And if I attempt to describe Thee by glorifying the oneness of Thy Being, I soon realize that such a conception is but a notion which mine own fancy hath woven, and that Thou hast ever been immeasurably exalted above the vain imaginations which the hearts of men have devised.

The glory of Thy might beareth me witness! Whoso claimeth to have known Thee hath, by virtue of such a claim, testified to his own ignorance; and whoso believeth himself to have attained unto Thee, all the atoms of the earth would attest his powerlessness and proclaim his failure. Thou hast, however, by virtue of Thy mercy that hath surpassed the kingdoms of earth and heaven, deigned to accept from Thy servants the laud and honor they pay to Thine own exalted Self, and hast bidden them celebrate Thy glory, that the ensigns of Thy guidance may be unfurled in Thy cities and the tokens of Thy mercy be spread abroad among Thy nations, and that each and all may be enabled to attain unto that which Thou hast destined for them by Thy decree, and ordained unto them through Thine irrevocable will and purpose.

Having testified, therefore, unto mine own impotence and the impotence of Thy servants, I beseech Thee, by the brightness of the light of Thy beauty, not to refuse Thy creatures attainment to the shores of Thy most holy ocean. Draw them, then, O my God, through the Divine sweetness of Thy melodies, towards the throne of Thy glory and the seat of Thine eternal holiness. Thou art, verily, the Most Powerful, the Supreme Ruler, the Great Giver, the Most Exalted, the Ever-Desired.

Grant, then, O my God, that Thy servant who hath turned towards Thee, hath fixed his gaze upon Thee, and clung to the cord of Thy mercifulness and favor, may be enabled to partake of the living waters of Thy mercy and grace. Cause him,

then, to ascend unto the heights to which he aspireth, and withhold him not from that which Thou dost possess. Thou art, verily, the Ever-Forgiving, the Most Bountiful.