

EXCERPT FROM THE SÚRIY-I-AḤZÁN (SÚRIH OF SORROWS)

Would that thou wert standing at this moment before the Throne and couldst hear how the melodies of eternity issue from the Temple of Bahá! By the one true God, should His creatures but cleanse their ears, and should they hear but a single strain of these melodies, they would, one and all, fall thunderstruck upon the dust in the presence of thy Lord, the All-Glorious, the Most Bountiful. Since, however, they have contended with God, He hath denied them the wonders of His grace and hath reckoned them in His sight as discarded lumps of clay. By God! Wert thou to consider their words, thou wouldst hear what was never heard from the Jews when We sent the Spirit unto them with a perspicuous Book, nor from the concourse of the Gospel when We caused the Day-Star of eternity to dawn above the horizon of Mecca with world-illuminating splendours, nor yet from the people of the Qur'án when the heavens of divine knowledge were cleft asunder and God manifested Himself, with the power of the truth and in the shadow of His All-Merciful Name, in the beauty of 'Alí.¹

At the mention of this blessed, this hallowed, this exalted and unapproachably wondrous Name, a Name in truth most wondrous, there arise within Me two conditions. I see My heart burning with the fire of grief over that which befell the Beauty of the All-Merciful at the hands of the people of the Qur'án. It is as though every limb of My body were being devoured by a consuming flame that, if left unchecked, would set ablaze the entire world. To this, God Himself beareth Me witness. Likewise I behold tears flowing from Mine eyes, and My limbs, and even the hairs of My head, at the calamities that were visited upon Him by the wicked, who slew God and recognized Him not, and who, boasting of allegiance to but one of His Names, suspended Him in the air and riddled His breast with the bullets of hatred.

Would that the universe had never been called into existence! Would that the world had never been brought into being! Would that no Prophet had ever been raised up, no Messenger sent forth, and no Cause established amongst men! Would that the Name of God had never been manifested betwixt earth and heaven, and that no Books, Tablets, or Scriptures had ever been revealed! Would that the Ancient Beauty had never been made to dwell among these workers of iniquity, nor to suffer at the hands of those who openly disbelieved in God and who committed against Him that which none on earth had ever dared commit! By the one true God! Wert thou, O 'Alí,² to examine My limbs and members, My heart and vitals, thou wouldst discover the traces of those same bullets that struck that Temple of God. Alas, alas! Thus was the Revealer of verses prevented from revealing them, and this Ocean from surging, and this Tree from bearing fruit,

¹ The Báb.

² The Súriy-i-Aḥzán was revealed for Mírzá 'Alíy-i-Sayyáh-i-Marághih'i.

and this Cloud from pouring down its rain, and this Sun from giving its light, and this Heaven from ascending on high. Yet, so hath it been irrevocably decreed in this Day.

Would that I had never been, and that My mother had never borne Me! Would that I had never heard of that which befell Him at the hands of those who worshipped the Names of God and yet slew Him Who is their Author, their Creator, their Fashioner, and their Revealer! Woe betide them for following the promptings of self and passion, and for committing that which caused the Maids of Heaven to faint away in their celestial chambers and the Spirit to cover its face in the dust by reason of that which these wolves have inflicted upon the Lord of Lords. All things weep at the tears I shed for Him; all things lament at the sighs I uttered over Our separation. Such indeed is My sorrow that the melodies of eternity can no longer flow from My lips, nor can the breezes of the spirit waft from My heart. And had I not sought to protect Myself, My body would have been cleft asunder and My life extinguished.

Behold, My former Manifestation weepeth in turn and addresseth thee, saying, "O 'Alí! By the righteousness of the one true God! Wert thou to examine My heart, My limbs, and My members, and to observe Mine inner and outer being, thou wouldst find the traces of the darts of rancour that have struck My latter Manifestation Who appeareth in My Name, the All-Glorious! Thus do I lament, and the Concourse on high lament My weeping. Thus do I bewail, and the dwellers of the Tabernacle of names bewail My cries. Thus do I sigh in anguish, and the inhabitants of the cities of eternity shed tears at My sighing for this Wronged One Who findeth Himself among the people of the Bayán. By God, they have inflicted upon Him that which the followers of the Qur'án never inflicted upon Me. Alas for what hath befallen Him at their hands! Whereupon did the denizens of earth and heaven fall distraught upon the dust at that which had afflicted that Beauty Who was seated upon the throne of divine nearness. Woe to them and to what their hands have wrought every morn and eve!"

Behold, the Ancient Beauty crieth out: "O Pen of the Most High! Turn aside from this theme which hath saddened all that wear the garment of existence, and make mention of another out of mercy for the Concourse on high. By the one true God! His Throne hath well-nigh been overwhelmed, notwithstanding its grandeur and loftiness."

When We heard this call, We ceased Our account of these sorrows and returned to Our previous theme, that thou mayest be fully apprised thereof. O 'Alí, be not dismayed at that which we have recounted to thee of the calamities that have been visited upon Our former and latter Manifestations. Gird up thy loins to assist the Cause of God, and arise in this path with constancy and unbending resolve.